09. Little Fishes Childcare Practise Policy and Procedures

Alongside associated procedures in this Childcare practice document, this policy was adopted by Little Fishes Nursery School on 01/06/2022.

Contents

09. Childcare practises policy

Aim

Children are safe, happy, and eager to participate and to learn.

Objectives

- We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and that they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities.
- Many of our children are part time and their needs are considered

Waiting list and admissions

Our provision is accessible to children and families from all sections of the local and wider community, our admissions procedures are fair, clear, and open to all parents who apply for places. The allocation of places is done on a 'first come, first served basis', unless there is an influx of applications in which in which case we consider staff/child ratios, the age of the child and registration requirements.

- We endeavour to operate in an inclusive manner which enables all children and families to access our services.
- We also have regard for the needs of parents who are:
  - looking to take up work, remain in work or extend their hours of work
  - looking to commence training or education
- We work in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that our provision is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Services are widely advertised, and information is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Where the number of children wanting places exceeds the number of places available a waiting list is operated using clear criteria for allocation of places as detailed in section *09.1 Procedure: Waiting list and admissions.*

Attendance

At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.

There are several reasons why a child may be absent from nursery. In most cases it is reasonable to expect that parents/carers alert the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays give adequate notice.
There is a procedure for checking and tracking absences and responding to prolonged absences.

Designated safeguarding leads must also adhere to Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from childcare.

Induction and settling

Introductions and induction of the child is carried out in a flexible process and the setting and parents work together to provide the best experience for the child.

To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children need to form attachments with the adults who care for them, primarily a key person, but others too. In this way they feel part of a community; they are able to contribute to that community and receive from it. Very young children, especially two- to three-year-olds, approach separation from their parent with anxieties, older children have a more secure understanding of 'people permanence' and are able to approach new experiences with confidence; but also need time to adjust and feel secure. It is the entitlement of all children to be settled comfortably into a new environment.

- When children start at Little Fishes they arrive at different levels of learning and development. To help them to settle and make rapid progress it is important that they are provided with care and learning opportunities that are suited to their needs, interests and abilities.
- This means establishing and understanding their starting points and whether there are any obstacles to their learning, so that teaching can be tailored to the 'unique child'.
- We apply the three-stage settling model, with a differentiated approach depending on the age and stage of the individual child.
- There is a procedure for when children do not settle

The role of the key person and prime times

The key person
'Each child must be assigned a key person' (EYFS 2021)

Young children need to form a secure attachment to their key person when they join the setting to feel safe, happy, and eager to participate and learn.

- A key person builds an on-going relationship with the child and his/her parents and is committed to that child's well-being while in the setting.
- Every child that attends is allocated a key person before they begin settling in - it is not the responsibility of the child to choose their own key person.
- As most of our staff are part time we operate a 'back-up/buddy' system. This identifies a second member of staff who fulfils the key person role.
- The role is fully explained to parents on induction, including a description of the role in the welcome pack.
- The key person is central to the settling process at Little Fishes.
- The key person spends time daily with his or her key children to ensure their well-being.

Parents
- Key persons are the first point of contact for parents with regard to matters concerning their child and any concerns parents may have are addressed with the key person in the first instance.
- Key persons support parents in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.
- The key person is responsible for the child's developmental records, completing the progress check at age two, and for sharing information about progress with the child's parents.

The role of a key person is regularly discussed at staff meetings and supervision meetings. All staff are expected to support the key person in their roles.

Learning and development
- The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment of children, using information gathered about their achievements, interests and learning styles to plan for each individual child's learning and development.
- If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with the setting manager or SENCO and the child's parents.
- The key person also maintains other responsibilities for key children including administering medication and checking accident records are signed.

Safeguarding children
- The key person has a responsibility towards their key children to report any concern about their development, welfare or child protection matter to the setting manager and to follow the procedures in this respect.
- Regular supervision with the manager provides further opportunities to discuss the progress and welfare of key children.
- The back-up key person has a duty likewise.

Prime times
Prime times of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and create opportunities for learning.

The key person role is explained further in the prime times procedures (09/06/07/08/10/14):
- Arrivals and departures are key times in the day when children need support from their carer to make the transition smooth and happy; these times of day also pose a certain level of risk as parents and carers come and go. All staff are aware of the potential risks and take measures to minimise them.
- Snack and mealtimes are key times in the day for being close and to promote security, as well as for exploration and learning. We understand and promote the importance of a healthy balanced diet for young children.
- Prime times also include nappy changing, snacks, lunchtime and resting times.

- We actively promote British values, inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity.

Positive behaviour

We operate a positive behaviour management approach. Behaviour management procedures cover how staff should respond to all aspects of behaviour, including children who exhibit challenging behaviour towards other children. Where a child's behaviour gives cause for concern, practitioners take into consideration the many factors that may be affecting them. This is done in partnership with the child's parents/carers and the principles of this procedure are adhered to.

The setting manager/SENCO will:
- help staff to implement procedure *09.11 Promoting positive behaviour* in their everyday practice
- advise staff on how to address behaviour issues, training and how to access expert advice if needed

Staff will already use different elements of physical contact with a child as part of their interaction in the setting especially when they are comforting a child or giving first aid. However, physical intervention to keep a child or other children safe is different and should only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

The EYFS states that physical intervention from a staff member towards a child may be used for the purposes of "averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if it is absolutely necessary".

Staff must do all they can to avoid using a physical intervention because this is not the preferred way of addressing children's behaviour. We keep children safe and maintain well-being by following the guidance found in 09.11 Procedure: Promoting positive behaviour

We train, supervise and support our staff to promote a good understanding of the impact of adult behaviour on children.

The curriculum and learning

We build on the Early Years Alliance's approach to learning based on three key principles:
1. Learning is a lifelong process, which enables children and adults to contribute to and shape their world.
2. We plan a curriculum to help children to learn to:
   be confident and independent
   - be aware of and responsive to their feelings
   - make caring and thoughtful relationships with other people
   - become increasingly excited by, interested in, and knowledgeable and questioning about the world around them.
3. We provide a wide range of interesting child-chosen and adult-initiated activities which:
   - give children opportunities to use all their senses

- help children of different ages and stages to play together
- help children be the directors of their own learning
  - help children develop an inquiring and questioning attitude to the world around them

We strive to fulfil all the conditions and requirements of the EYFS framework 2021.

Children with SEND

We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (DfE and DoH 2015) which states that local authorities must ensure that all early years providers that they fund in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors are aware of the requirement on them to meet the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. When securing funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds local authorities should promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or SEN; this includes removing barriers that prevent access to early education and working with parents to give each child support to fulfil their potential.

The term SEND support defines arrangements for identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are required to offer appropriate support and intervention and to promote equality of opportunity for children that we care for.

Children's SEND generally falls within the following four broad areas of need and support:
- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

Through ongoing assessment of key persons and the oversight of a SENCO we have procedures in place for the early identification, assessment and support for children with SEND. We use the graduated approach outlined in 09.12 Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND procedures.

Funded places – free entitlement

All 3 and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours free childcare each week for 38 weeks of the year. Families who meet the criteria may be eligible for 30 hours funding. Some eligible 2-year-olds are also entitled. Funded places are offered in accordance with national and local codes of practice and adherence to the relevant Provider Agreement/Contract with the local authority.

09.01 Procedure: Waiting list and admissions

Waiting list procedure

We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information, and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear and open to all parents who apply for a place.

- The setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- Information about the setting is accessible, using plain English, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, provided in different languages and in other formats if requested.
- Children with disabilities are supported to take full part in all activities within the setting and the setting makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that this will be the case from the time the child is placed on the waiting list.
- If we require a waiting list this is arranged in the order the request was received. In addition, we may take into account the following:
    - the age of the child with priority being given to children eligible for the free entitlement
    - the vicinity of the home to the setting
    - siblings already attending the setting
    - the capacity of the setting to meet the individual needs of the child
- Funded places are offered in accordance with the Early Years Entitlements: Operational Guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018) and any local conditions in place at the time,
- Where it is financially viable to do so, a place is kept vacant for an emergency admission.
- The setting and its practices are welcoming and make it clear that fathers, mothers, other relations and carers and childminders are all welcome.
- The setting and its practices operate in a way that encourages positive regard for and understanding of difference and ability, whether gender, family structure, class, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
- The needs and individual circumstances of children joining the setting are monitored on *09.1c Little Fishes registration form*, to ensure that no accidental or unintentional discrimination is taking place and that reasonable adjustments are made as required.
- The procedures in 05 Promoting inclusion, equality and diversity are shared and promoted to all.
- Places are provided in accordance with *09.01d Little Fishes terms and conditions* issued to every parent when the child takes up their place. Failure to comply may result in the provision of a place being withdrawn.

Admissions and administration procedures

Parents interested in enrolling their child are invited to visit the setting for a 'show round' and are given an **Admissions Pack**. This contains:

- *09.01a Little Fishes Prospectus*
- *09.01b Little Fishes Application form*
- *09.01c Little Fishes Registration form*

- *09.01d Little Fishes Terms and Conditions*
- *07.01a Little Fishes Privacy Notice*

Registering an interest
To register an interest, parents are required to:
- Complete *09.01b Little Fishes Application form* to request a place, this is processed by our administrator.
- Confirm they have read *07.01a Little Fishes Privacy Notice* and consent to Little Fishes holding their data

Securing a place
To secure a place, parents are required to:
- Complete *09.01b Little Fishes Registration Form* which contains personal information about the child and family and also permissions, that must be completed in full, prior to the child securing a space.
- Confirm they have read and understood *09.01d Little Fishes Terms and Conditions* that govern the basis by which we provide childcare
- Pay a £50 deposit, refunded when the child starts at Little Fishes.

The completed paperwork is checked by the setting manager or deputy before the child starts and filed in the registration file. The offer of a place and the start date are confirmed by email by the administrator.

Before starting at the setting
The administrator contacts parents by email to arrange the first settling sessions and send 09.01e Settling pack, including:
- *Little Fishes Background Information form* – welfare and care information specific to the child to assist the key worker to settle the child into nursery.
- Information on the 3 stage settling process.

The email also contains information such as tips for getting ready for nursery, what to bring to nursery, birth certificate to verify ID and immunisation record in Health record (red book).

Additional information collected at the first settling session
- The key person is responsible for discussing any information needing clarification on the background form, and for ensuring that any further forms (medical/ allergy/SEN/ SG) are completed if relevant.
- Parents are given a **Welcome pack** at their child's first settling containing information on the setting process, introduction to key person and the role of a key person, advice on how to access our policies and procedures.
- Photos are collected to make child's 'home book'

Monitoring

The administrator / managers check the admission process is complete and fill out *04.02b Medical summary form* (if required) and take note of parent's permission / consent and ensure all the information is clearly displayed in register.

Children with SEND

The manager must seek to determine an accurate assessment of a child's needs at registration. If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core budget, then an application for SEN inclusion funding must be made immediately. In rare cases a private arrangement may be made with families to allow provision to be met.

Children with identified SEND must be offered a place when one becomes available as with any other child. However, the start date for children with more complex SEND will be determined by the preparations made to ensure the child's safety, well-being and accessibility in the setting. If a child's needs determine that adjustments need to be made, the manager must outline a realistic timeframe for completion, detailing the nature of adjustments e.g. risk assessment, staff training, health care plan and all other adjustments required. The child's safety at all times is paramount.

At the time of registration, the manager must check to see if a child's family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (for eligible children over three years)**,** if so, the manager must ask for evidence to enable them to claim the Disability Access Fund directly from the local authority. If the family is eligible but not in receipt of the allowance, the setting manager will support the family in their application. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim.

Preparation for admitting a child with SEND must be made in a reasonable amount of time and any delay in the child starting is scrutinised by the setting manager to avoid discrimination and negative impact on the child and family. During a preparation period the family and relevant agencies and the local authority must be regularly updated on the progress of the preparations.

Safeguarding/child protection

If information is provided by the parents that a child who is starting at the setting is currently, or has had involvement with social care, the designated person will contact the agency to seek further clarification.

09.02 Procedure: Absence

Parents are advised that they should contact the setting within half hour of the child's expected arrival time.

Recording absence

The reason for absence is recorded in the absence book, noting child's name, reason for absence, method of informing us and adult taking message.

All absences are recorded on the register and in the absence book with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.

Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

Unexplained absence and safeguarding
- If a child who normally attends fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents, the session leader takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
- Attempts to contact the child's parents or other named carers continue throughout the day on the first day of absence.
- If no contact is made with the parents and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the register and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made. This may be by email. The attempted contact is noted in the child's record in the welfare file.
- If contact has not been made within three working days (three consecutive sessions), the DSL will contact children's services for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services maybe contacted as per LSP procedures.
- If at any time further information comes to light that gives cause for concern, procedure *06.03 Responding to safeguarding or child protection* concerns is immediately followed.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated safeguarding lead attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If contact is made and a valid reason given, the information is recorded in the child's file.
- If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on 06.1c Safeguarding incident reporting form, If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence and safeguarding procedures are followed.

- Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.
- If at any time information comes to light that gives cause for concern, *06. Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults* procedures are followed immediately.

Poor/irregular attendance

Whilst attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up. Absences are manually tracked to identify any causes of concern. A record of this is kept in the welfare file.

- In the first instance the Little Fishes manager will discuss a child's attendance with their parents to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parent/s to offer support where possible.
- If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the setting manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.
- Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.

In the case of funded children the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, taking into account the reason for the absence and impact on the setting. The setting manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting**.**

09.03 Procedure: Settling in arrangements

The three stage settling model

The setting manager and key person explain the need for settling in, the three stage settling model and agree a plan with the parents. As a starting point, this consists of a one hour accompanied session and then a one hour one-to-one with key person but unaccompanied by parent. The plan will then be agreed with parents depending on how the child has settled. This is a flexible process with the child at the centre.

The initial settling sessions are arranged by the administrator with regards to when the key person is in. The key person takes the lead in reviewing and agreeing any further settling sessions, if needed, until the child is happily settled and these are noted in the child's welfare file.

Stage 1 – Promoting proximity
- For the first session, the parent attends with the child and does not leave for any time.
- On the first day, the key person shows the parent around, introduces members of staff, and explains how the day is organised, making the parent and child feel welcome and comfortable.
- One to two hours is sufficient to attend on any one day initially.
- The key person always greets the parent and child. (Shift patterns may need to be adjusted when settling in.)
- The parent is invited to play with their child and the key person spends time with them. As much time as possible is allowed for the key person to do this.
- The key person observes the parent's interactions, methods of comfort, and preferably snack and changing times.
- The key person sensitively engages with the child, establishing eye contact and warm and encouraging words. The parent is the main source of comfort for the child.
- The key person observes to see if the child is responding to them, beginning to explore the environment (if able), noting what they seem to like and making sure it is available the next visit.
- Younger or unsettled children may require more settling session with their parent to establish proximity.

Stage 2 – Promoting secure base
- If the child is responding happily to the situation (body language, smiles and eagerness engage in activities/play), then the child is ready for the parent to spend short periods of time away. If signs of distress are still apparent then the separation will be approached more slowly, starting with the parent staying in the room, but taking a 'back seat', while the key person spends time with the child.
- When the parent leaves, they always say goodbye and say they are coming back. Parents should never slip away without the baby noticing; this leads to greater distress.

- One hour is recommended for the first time a child is left but this may be a shorter period of time and gradually extended if the key person and parent feel this would be more beneficial.
- Parents can be asked to bring in a comfort toy from home. Some parents may agree to send in a recording of a song that they sing to get their baby to sleep, especially if it is in their home language.

Attachment can be seen when the child shows signs that they are happy to transfer their need to be dependent onto the key person. Key persons look for signs such as the child being pleased to see them, looking for them when distressed, responding to play and taking comfort from the key person

Stage 3 – Promoting independence
- Parents can now leave their child for longer, until they can cope with a full day.
- After 4-6 weeks, the key person reviews the settling in plan with the parent and discusses how well the child has settled. They discuss problems that may have arisen and plan how they will be overcome.

Adapting the 3 stage settling based on age, stage SEND, EAL and part time attendance

Two-year-olds starting a setting for the first time
- A two-year-old may have little or no experience of group care. As part of gathering information from parents, it is important to find out about the child's experience of non-parental care, for example grandparents, or childminder; this informs staff as to how a child may respond to a new situation.
- The settling session should be arranging within a short timespan as possible – a long gap may necessitate starting the settling process again.
- The three-stage approach involving *Proximity, Secure Base* and *Dependency/Independence* is applied.
- After registration, a settling-in plan is drawn up. Where, if possible, a home visit is carried out for the same purpose.
- To settle in a two-year-old, the setting will go through the same process of gradually increasing the time a child attends with a parent/carer during the proximity stage.
- This will be flexible depending on how the child responds – every child is unique.
- On the first day, the parent attends with the child, and stays for an hour session (less if the child becomes tired). On day two, the parent stays for the session. The child/parent and key worker can make a special look book, based on the photos the parents provide. .
- If a secure base is established the parent and key person will decide to move to the next stage of settling.
- It is evident that the child is developing a sense of secure base when he or she shows interest in activities and begins to engage with the key person and other children. Then the parent / carer may gradually start to spend short periods of time away

from child to see how the child responds, this time increases until the child can manage a whole session without the parent.

- Separation causes anxiety in two-year-olds, as they have no concept of where their parents have gone. Parents should always say goodbye and tell them when they will return. Patience with the process will ensure children are happy and eager to come to play and be cared for in the setting.

Three- and four-year-olds settling for the first time
- Most children of this age can move through the stages more quickly and confidently.
- Some children take longer, and their needs for proximity and secure base stages should be accommodated as much as possible.
- Some children appear to leap to dependency/independence within a couple of days. In most cases, they will revert to the need for proximity and secure base. It can be difficult to progress to true dependency/independence and this can be frustrating.
- After registration, a settling-in plan is drawn up and in some circumstances a home visit is recommended.
- On the first day, the parent attends with the child for an hour and the key person and parent review how they feel the child managed.
- If a secure base is established; If the child shows interest in the activities and is beginning to engage with the key person and other children, the child may be happy to be left for an hour. If not, a second visit with the parent will be recommended.
- If by the third day, the child is able to spend more time without the parent, the child may be ready for a short day or session, progressing to a full day or session when ready.
- If the child is transferring or has attended another setting this process may be quicker.
- Parents are encouraged to explain to their child where they are going, and that they will return. We can use resources such as 'A day in the Life of Little Fishes' here.

For children with SEND
- If a child has been identified as having SEND then the key person/SENCO and parents will need to identify and address potential barriers to settling in e.g. timings of medication and invasive procedures, specific routines and levels of support.
- Staffing is organised so the key person can spend one-to-one time with the child until they are at stage 2 of the three-step process.

For children whose first language is not English
- For many children learning English as an additional language, the stage of proximity takes longer as the child is dependent upon the parents' input to make sense of what is going on.
- If the parent does not speak English, efforts are made to have an interpreter at the first settling/induction session; it will be helpful for them to see around the setting and be clear about their role in interpreting in the play area.
- The settling-in programme is explained to the parent, and it is emphasised how important it is that they stay with the child and talk to him/her in the home language to be able to explain things.

- Through the interpreter, the key person will try to gauge the child's level of skills in their home language; this will give the key person an idea of the child's interests and levels of understanding.
- The need for the parent to converse in the child's home language is important.
- The key person makes the parent feel welcome using smiles and gestures.
- With the parent, make a list of key words in the child's home language; sometimes it is useful to write the word as you would pronounce it. These words will be used with the child and parents will be addressed with 'hello' and 'goodbye' in their language.
- The key person prepares for the child's visits by having a favourite toy or activity ready for the child to provide a means to interact with the child.
- Children will be spoken to as per any other child, using gestures and facial expressions to help.
- When the child feels happy to spend time with the key person (secure base), the parent can leave for progressively longer periods of time.
- Progress with settling in will be done as with any other child; it just takes a little longer to reach dependency/independence.
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Part-time children
- Part-time children have the same needs when settling in as full-time children. However, part-time attendance means that there may be gaps between times the child is in one week to the next.
- If feasible children can be offered extra sessions to help with the settling in process. The normal pattern of attendance can then resume.

When children do not seem to settle
- It is not good for children to be in a setting when they are acutely distressed and anxious. A child who is not securely attached and settled is overwhelmed with fear. They are unable to participate in any activity and do not learn. It is not in their immediate or long-term interest to attempt to prolong what is an agonising experience for them.
- A highly distressed child will need 1:1 attention consistently; their distress will upset other children and put stress on staff. If this is the case, the key person discusses with the manager or deputy.
- Attempts are made to reduce anxiety and distress through a planned approach with the parent.
- The 3 stages of settling-in are reviewed and the plan is pitched back at the appropriate stage.
- Particular triggers of distress are discussed to see what can be done to alleviate it.
- If all attempts have been made and the child still cannot cope without the parent, then the place is offered only with the parent attending. In some cases, it may be appropriate to withdraw the place and help the parent consider alternatives. For a child 'in need' this may need to be discussed with the social care worker, where one is allocated to the child, health visitor or referring agency.

When a parent is unable or refuses to take part in settling in

- Information about the 'settling in' plan is given at the show round visit and the reasons are explained.
- If the parent feels that this will be difficult – perhaps another close relative can come in instead.
- Genuine difficulties need to be handled sensitively, but generally speaking this is not an issue where the parent has a choice not to attend with their child. A parent who refuses to take part in settling in may have the offer of the place withdrawn.

Prolonged absences
- If children are absent from the setting for any for periods of time beyond one or two weeks, their attachment to their key persons will have decreased and will need to be built up again.
- Parents are made aware of the need to 're-settle' their children and a plan is agreed.

Settling-in staff arrangements
- Start times are staggered to allow sufficient one-to-one time with each child and parent.
- Children should preferably at least be at stage 2 of settling before the key person begins settling another child.

Where a number of children need to start – key persons can start settling one child in the morning and another in the afternoon. In their first week, children who are settling in will not stay all day

09.04 The role of the key person

The key person role

- The key person conducts the progress check at age two for their key children. For newer members of staff this is supported by the managers.
- The role is fully explained to parents on induction (see Role Of the Key person- Welcome pack) and the name of the child's key person and 'back up' key person is displayed in the register.
- The setting manager and key person explain the need for a settling in process. See 09.03 Settling in arrangements, including the three stage settling model.
- Shift patterns and staff absence can affect a child who is just settling in; where possible, settling in should be matched to when the key person is on duty.
- The number of children for each key person takes into account the individual needs of children and the capacity of the key person to manage their cohort; it is also influenced by part-time places and part time staff. The setting manager should aim for consistency i.e. matching part-time staff to part-time children; full-time children should not be divided between key persons during the week.
- Photographs of key persons and their key groups are displayed clearly.

Back-up/ buddy key person

- As most of our staff are part time we operate a 'back-up/buddy' system. This identifies a second member of staff who fulfils the key person role.
- The back up/buddy can also fulfil the role in the absence of the main key person, for example, during annual leave or sickness.
- The role of the back-up key person is to step in when the main key person is absent or unavailable to provide a stable and consistent care relationship for the child.
- The back-up key person is identified when the child starts but is not introduced to the child until an attachment is beginning to form with the key person.
- The back-up key person gradually forms a relationship with the child until the child is happy to be cared for by this person.
- The back-up key person shares information with parents in the key person's absence and makes notes in the child's records where appropriate.
- The back-up key person ensures information is shared with the key person.

09.05 Procedure: Process for establishing children's starting points

The aim of establishing a child's starting points is to ensure that the most appropriate care and learning is provided from the outset.

Starting points are established by gathering information from the first contact with the child's parents at induction and during the 'settling in' period. Staff do not 'wait and see' how the child is settling before they begin to gather information.

The key person is responsible for establishing their key children's starting points by gathering information in the following ways:
- observation of the child during settling in visits
- discussion with the child's parents
- building on information that has been gathered during registration by referring to the background registration form

The information gathered is recorded within two weeks of the child's official start date and sooner where possible.

- The key person must make a 'best fit' judgment about the age band the child is working in, referring to Development Matters or Birth to Five Matters.
- For 2-year-olds the *09.05b Checkpoint for 2-year-olds form* can be used as an initial assessment but with an awareness that the settling process will also impact children's behaviour/ability to demonstrate what they can do.
- For 3- and 4-year-olds the key person uses the *09.05a On-entry assessment form* and the checkpoint form (*09.05 c/d*) relating to the child's age.
- The key person should complete details by indicating where they have gathered their evidence from, using more than one source where possible i.e. parent comment and observation during settling in.

If the initial assessment raises any concerns that extra support may be required procedure *09.12 Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND* is followed.

09.06 Prime times – arrivals and departures

Prime times of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and to create opportunities for learning

Arrivals

During the pandemic it was necessary to limit adults within the building so handover was to the session leader at the nursery door. The child was greeted by a key person as soon as possible. This system is still operating as the parents/staff felt that changing the arrival procedure would unsettle children.

From Sept 2022
Whenever possible the key person or back up key person always greets the younger 2 year old children. This ensures that young children are received into the setting by a familiar and trusted adult. The session leader marks their presence and time of arrival in the register.

If a child who is expected fails to arrive, the session leader contacts the child's parents to find out why the child is absent following *09.02 Absence procedures*.

The key person ensures there is a clear instruction of who will be collecting the child, and at what time.

The key person or session leader greets the parents and takes time to hear information the parents need to share. They inform the parents of aspects of the day, such as if there is an agency member of staff or flexible worker in, which members of staff will be around later when parents collect their child, any planned outings, or special planned event. Any consent forms are signed.

The key person receives the child physically as soon as possible and tunes in to how he or she is feeling and prepares to meet his/her needs.

Parents of younger children should spend a few minutes with their child and key person before leaving. Many parents will be in a hurry, but this can have an unsettling effect.

Always ensure that the parents say goodbye to their child and say when they are coming back, such as 'after lunch', rather than just 'later'.

If the member of staff receiving the child is not the key person, the member of staff will hand over the information shared by the parents to the key person when they arrive. Any messages are recorded on the daily sheet.

Injuries noted on arrival

If a child is noted to have visible injuries when they arrive at the setting *06.03 Safeguarding procedure* is followed and a *06.01d Little Fishes pre-existing injury form* completed. This is stored in the child individual section of the welfare file.

Changing shifts and handing over information

When the key person leaves or goes on a break, and there is relevant information for their child's care they share this information with the session lead. The lead feeds back any information to the key person on return to ensure that all information is passed on.
If someone other than the key person receives the child, he/she will share any information from the parent and write a note for the key person. Confidential information should be shared with the setting manager to pass on.
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Departures

- Children are prepared for home, with clean faces, hands and clothes if required.
- The key person tries to greet parents when they arrive, ensuring that the person who has arrived to collect the child is named on registration form or we have notice. They hand over the child personally and enter the time of departure in the register.
- Only persons aged over 16 years should normally collect children. If a parent has no alternative, then this is agreed with the setting manager and a risk assessment completed and signed by the parent. In all cases the setting manager will ask the parents to ensure that in future alternative arrangements are made. If the parent is under 16 years of age, a risk assessment will be completed. No child will be collected by anyone who has not reached 14 years of age. The risk assessment should take account of factors such as age/vulnerability of child, journey travelled, arrangements upon leaving the setting to go home/elsewhere.
- Practitioners verbally exchange information with parents.
- Accident forms and pre-existing injury forms are signed.
- If someone other than the key person is with the child at the end of the day, the key person should pass general information to the other staff or write a note for the parents.
- Confidential information should be shared with the setting manager to pass on.

Maintaining children's safety and security

Arrivals and departures pose a particular threat to the safety and security of the children, particularly when parents arrive at the same time or when in shared premises. To minimise the risk of a child leaving the building unnoticed, the setting manager conducts a risk assessment that identifies potential risks and the measures put in place to minimise them, such as staff busy talking to individual parents or doors left ajar. The risk assessment is shared with their line manager and is updated as and when required.

09.07 Procedure: Prime times – Snack times

The details of how snacks are prepared, presented is outlined in *03 Food safety and hygiene policy*.

- A 'snack' is prepared mid-morning and can be organised according to the discretion of the session manager e.g. picnic on a blanket.
- Older children may also take turns to help set the table for snack. Small plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and snack-time. After snack time they use a hand sanitiser.
- After the age of two, children can drink semi-skimmed milk as a main drink, as long as they are eating a varied and balanced diet.
- Fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or tomato, are offered in batons, which children should be encouraged to help in preparing. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds but are sliced to minimise a choking hazard.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
- Biscuits should not be offered generally, but rice cakes, breadsticks, bread or oatcakes are good alternatives.
- Children are asked and invited to snack when they want refreshments and leave when they have had enough. Children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, butter bread, cut fruit etc. Older children are encouraged to serve themselves.
- Children sit up to a table and are offered a choice of healthy snack and a choice of milk or water to drink.
- A member of staff is always with the children to encourage conversation and develop children's social skills.
- Information for parents is displayed on the parent's notice board, including identification of any foods containing allergens

09.08 Procedure: Prime times – Lunchtime

- Lunches are eaten in the Octagon room. Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes.
- Younger children sit at a table with an adult. Where possible every table has an adult sitting with them. Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction of children with their group and the adults who care for them. It is a time of sensory learning and learning skills, as well as for the fundamental satisfaction of being fed.
- Staff who are eating with the children must role-model hygiene, healthy eating and best practice at all times, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children. Staff lunches must be ready/prepared and staff must not leave numbers to prepare food.
- Staff arrange the table before children sit down; there should be no waiting time.
- Children always wash their hands clean before they eat.
- Key persons are aware of any issues an individual child may have and discuss this with parents.
- Staff check lunches are suitable and do not contain nuts. Any concerns are discussed with parents and areas of concern reported to the managers.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. Children with lunch remaining at the end of the lunch period are given the option to bring their lunch back to the main room.
- Children are encouraged but not forced to finish their lunch. Any issues with quantities can be discussed with parents by the key person.
- If children do not eat their savoury course, they are not denied pudding. Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
- All packaging and uneaten food goes home for parents to monitor.
- In order to protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
- After lunch children are encouraged to pack away their own things, return their water bottle and lunch box to their shelves. Older children are encouraged to wipe the table/ sweep the floor.
- Children go to the bathroom and wash their hands after lunch.

09.09 Procedure: Prime times – Intimate care and nappy changing

Nappy changing times are key times in the day for being close and promoting security as well as for communication, exploration and learning.

The layout of the setting makes it difficult for staff to change children within the sight or hearing of other staff but staff always tell others when they are changing a nappy or taking children to the toilet. Only regular staff with DBS checks are permitted to take children to the toilet.

A risk assessment is carried out and there are procedures on place to minimise risk during toilet and nappy changing times.

Nappy changing

These procedures sit alongside the health and safety procedures for *01.04 Children's changing areas* and *01.05 Children toilets and wash basins*.

- Young children are changed whilst always maintaining their dignity and privacy.
- Key persons know the personalised changing or checking times for the children in their care.
- It is preferable for the key person to undertake changing children in their key groups wherever possible.
- Children are encouraged to assist in the process, they may get their own nappy and wipes from their changing bag.
- Changing areas are warm, appropriately sited and there are safe areas to lay young children if they need to have their bottoms cleaned.
- Members of staff put on aprons before changing starts and the area is prepared, gloves are always worn for soiled nappies.
- All members of staff are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing nappies.
- Key persons ensure that nappy changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.
- Staff never turn their back on a child or leave them unattended on a changing mat.
- Wipes or cotton wool and water are used to clean the child.
- Staff are gentle when changing; they allow time for communicating.
- Staff avoid pulling faces and making negative comment about the nappy contents.
- Staff do not make inappropriate comments about babies' genitals, nor attempt to pull back a baby boy's foreskin to clean unless there is a genuine need to do so for hygiene purposes.
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it and talk to a friend who is also using the toilet.
- If young children are left in wet or soiled nappies/pull-ups in the setting, this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter.
- Nappy changing is always done in an appropriate/designated area. Children are not changed in play areas or next to snack tables.

Nappy changing records, illness and recording medication

- It is recorded when the child was changed and whether the child has passed a stool and if there was anything unusual about it e.g. hard and shiny, soft and runny or an unusual colour.
- A stool that is an unusual colour can usually be related to the food that was eaten, so it is important that this is noted. However, a stool that is black, green or very white indicates a problem, and the child should be taken to the doctor.
- Very soft, watery stools are signs of diarrhoea; strict hygiene needs to be carried out in cleaning the changing area to prevent spread of infection. If the child has 2 loose stools, the parent should be called immediately to collect their child and recommended to seek medical advice. A child must not return to the setting until they were clear from diarrhoea for 48 hours
- Sometimes a young child may have a sore bottom. This may have happened at home as a result of poor care; or the child may have eaten something that, when passed, created some soreness. The child also may be allergic to a product being used. This must be noted and discussed with the parent and a plan devised and agreed to help heal the soreness. This may include use of nappy cream or leaving the baby without a nappy in some circumstances. If a medicated nappy cream such as Sudocrem is used, this must be recorded as per procedure *04.2a Little Fishes medication form consent form* but it is sufficient to record administration in the nappy changing record.

Young children, potty training and toileting

- In addition to the nappy changing procedures above: It is preferable for the key person to take the child to the toilet while they are 'potty training'.
- Staff work with parents to discuss the best time to potty train.
- Parents are encouraged to use 'pull ups' as soon as they are comfortable with this and agree.
- Children can be changed whilst standing up, providing it is still possible to clean them effectively.
- Each young child has his/her own bag to hand with their nappies/pull ups and changing wipes.
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it and talk to a friend who is also using the toilet.
- They are encouraged to wash their hands and have soap and paper towels to hand.
- The procedure for dealing with sore bottoms is the same as above.
- Parents are encouraged to provide enough changes of clothes for 'accidents' when children are potty training.
- Spare clothes are kept by the setting, they are clean, in good condition and are in a range of appropriate sizes. Children can help select clothing if needed.
- Older children use the toilet when needed and are encouraged to be independent.
- Members of staffs do not wipe older children's bottoms unless there is a need, or unless the child has asked.

09.10 Procedure: Prime times – Rest times arrangements

Young children need to pace their activities and an area is provided in the book area that is soft and comfortable for children to rest quietly. Books are allowed in this area, but children are encouraged to use it as a quiet space.

For a brief period after lunch quiet activities are provided that encourage a slower pace. Soft music is played and children have a variety of calmer activities to choose from.
Very occasionally a young child falls asleep in-situ. They can have a short nap in the quiet area. If this happens staff check they are safe, remove hair accessories and any hazards. Sleeping children are supervised within sight and/or hearing of staff at all times. The key person would inform parents.

We do not have the capacity to provide an area for younger children to sleep.

09.11 Procedure: Promoting positive behaviour

Positive behaviour is located within the context of the development of children's personal, social and emotional skills and well-being. A key person who understands children's needs, their levels of development, personal characteristics, and specific circumstances, supports this development. This ensures children's individual needs are understood and supported.

Settling into a new environment is an emotional transition for young children especially as they learn to develop and master complex skills needed to communicate, negotiate and socialise with their peers. Skills such as turn taking and sharing often instigate minor conflicts between children as they struggle to deal with powerful emotions and feelings.

During minor disputes, staff and key persons help children to reflect and regulate their actions and, in most instances, children learn how to resolve minor disputes themselves. However, some incidents are influenced by factors, requiring a strategic approach especially if the behaviour causes harm or distress to the child or others. These situations are managed by the SENCO/key person using a stepped approach which aims to resolve the issue and/or avoid the behaviour escalating and causing further harm.

This is an unsettling time for young children. Practitioners are alert to the emotional well-being of children who may be affected by the disruption to their normal routine.

Rewards and sanctions

Children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.

Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide immediate results for the adult but do not teach a child how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the skills to manage situations and emotions themselves. Instead, a child is taught to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adult expectations to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction). If used, the type of rewards and their functions must be carefully considered.

Children are never labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group to be left in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. If a child is distressed or causing harm to others, it may help to remove them from the immediate environment where the incident occurred. They should be taken to a quiet area by their key person for up to 5 minutes to help them calm down. If appropriate, the key person can use this time to help the child reflect on what has happened (thinking time). Physical punishment of any kind is never used or threatened which could adversely affect a child's well-being. If staff become aware that another person has given corporal punishment to a child, they follow *06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults* procedures.

Physical intervention to safeguard a child/children must be carried out as per the guidance in this procedure.

The three-step behaviour process

Step 1
- The setting manager, SENCo and other relevant staff members are knowledgeable with, and apply the procedure 09.11 Promoting positive behaviour.
- Unwanted behaviours are addressed using an agreed and consistently applied approach to de-escalate situations.
- Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others must be discussed by the key person, SENCO/setting manager. During the meeting the key person must use their all-round knowledge of the child and family to share any known influencing factors such as a new baby in the family, child and/or parental illness, underlying additional needs to help place the child's behaviour into context
- Appropriate adjustments to practice must be agreed within the setting. If relevant, a risk assessment should be carried out.
- *09.12a SEN support:record of concern* should be completed.
- If the adjustments are successful and the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur, or cause concern then normal monitoring can resume.

Step 2
- If the behaviour remains a concern, then the key person and SENCO must liaise with the parents to try to discover possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If relevant and appropriate the views of the child must be sought and considered to help identify a cause.
- If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting, then the setting manager/SENCo must suggest using a focused intervention approach to identifying a trigger for the behaviour such as the ABC approach, i.e. Antecedents – what happened before; Behaviour – what was the behaviour observed; Consequences – what happened after the event.
- If a trigger is identified, then the SENCO and key person must meet with the parents to plan support for the child through a graduated approach via SEN support. *09.12b SEN Support - Action plan*
- Aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a staff member intervening immediately to stop the behaviour and prevent escalation using the agreed initial intervention approach. If the behaviour has been significant or may have a detrimental effect on the child, the parents of the victim of the behaviour and

the parents of the perpetrator must be informed. If the setting has applied a physical intervention, they must follow the guidance as set out below. The designated person completes 0*6.1c Safeguarding incident reporting form* and contact Ofsted if appropriate. A record of discussions is made and parents are asked to sign.

- Parents must also be asked to sign risk assessments, where the risk assessment relates to managing the behaviour of a specific child.
- If relevant, actions for dealing with the behaviour at home are agreed with parents and incorporated into the action plan. Other staff are informed of the agreed interventions and help implement the actions. The plan must be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person/SENCo until improvement is noticed.
- Incidents and intervention relating to unwanted/challenging behaviour by children must be clearly and appropriately logged.

Step 3
- If despite applying initial intervention to deescalate situations and focused interventions to identify triggers the child's behaviour continues to occur and/or is of significant concern, the SENCO and key person invite the parents to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child. It may be agreed that the setting request support from the Early Help team and/or other specialist services such as the Area SENCO. This will help address most developmental or welfare concerns. If the behaviour is part of other welfare concerns that include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, safeguarding procedures 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures must be followed immediately.
- Advice provided by external agencies is incorporated in *09.12b SEN Support - Action plan* and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child's progress.
- If a review determines a statutory assessment may be needed then all relevant documentation must be collected in preparation for an Education Health and Care Assessment which may lead onto an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Use of physical intervention

- To offer protection to children a range of appropriate graded interventions may be needed before physical intervention is applied.
- Most single incidents such as a child throwing a book on the floor or kicking a chair usually only require a verbal intervention from a member of staff.
- In other situations, an intervention can be applied through mechanical and environmental means such as locking doors and stair gates. This usually stops a situation escalating.
- However, there will be some situations where a child places themselves or others in danger which requires an immediate need for the use of both verbal and physical intervention.
- If a single or persistent incident requires a physical intervention such as physical handling from a staff member towards a child, then this is used intentionally to restrict a child's movement against their will.
- In most cases this can be applied through the use of the adult's body gently and safely blocking the child from access to danger or to prevent danger.

- To physically intervene, a practitioner may use "reasonable force" to protect a child from injuring themselves or others.
- Legally a practitioner may also use reasonable force to prevent a child from damaging property. However, we would expect that in instances of damaging physical property a child would only experience a physical intervention if the broken property presented a risk or is high value.
- If a situation arises which requires urgent physical hands-on intervention this is best applied by the staff who knows the child well such as their key person who is more able to calm them or use other known methods for defusing situations without physical intervention.

Physical handling guidance

We use the principle of applying reasonable minimal force and handling in proportion to the situation. Staff use as little force as necessary to maintain safety. This intervention should only be used for as short a period as possible, using the following principles:

- keeping the child's safety and well-being paramount
- a calm, gentle but firm approach and application of the intervention
- never restricting the child's ability to breathe
- side-by-side contact with the child
- no gap between theirs or the child's body
- keeping the adults back as straight as possible
- avoiding close head-to-head positioning to avoid injury to the child and themselves (head butting)
- only holding the child by their 'long' bones to avoid grasping at the child's joints where pain and damage are most likely to occur
- avoiding lifting the child unless necessary
- reassuring the child and talking about what has happened
- only applying a physical intervention on a disabled child if training or preferred method is provided from a reputable external source e.g. British Institute of Learning Disabilities www.bild.org.uk/

Risks

There are risks associated with any physical intervention and handling of a child. The younger and more vulnerable a child may be, the greater risk to the child of using physical intervention towards them. However, there are also risks to children associated with not intervening physically; for instance, if a practitioner did not take hold of a child by the wrist, they may have run into the path of a fast-moving car.

Before intervening physically to protect a child from immediate harm a practitioner needs to decision make in a split second, considering the following factors. This is described as dynamic risk assessment.

- What is the immediate risk to this child if I do not intervene now?
- What might the risks be if I do intervene? If this was my child, what would I want someone looking after them to do in this situation?

- What is the minimum level of intervention that will be effective here? How can I do this as gently as possible for as short a time as possible and how am I going to manage myself to stay calm?

Recording

Any instance of physical intervention is fully recorded immediately and reported to the designated person as soon as possible on *6.01c Safeguarding incident reporting form*, ensuring that it is clearly stated when and how parents were informed. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the form which is then kept on the child's records. The designated safeguarding lead decides who will notify the parent and when, ensuring that the parent signs to say they have been notified. An individual risk assessment should be completed after any physical intervention with a child which considers the risks and likelihood of such behaviour re-occurring and how this will be managed. The risk assessment should be agreed and signed by parents.

Temporary suspension (fixed term)

Any decision to temporarily suspend a child must be carefully considered lawful, reasonable and fair. If despite following the stepped approach for behaviour it is necessary to temporarily suspend a child, for no more than five days, on the grounds of health and safety, the following steps are followed.

The manager's line manager will be consulted. The manager provides a written request to suspend a child to their line manager; the request must detail the reason why the child must be suspended and the length of time of the proposed suspension.

If their line manager approves, the parents must be invited to a meeting to discuss next steps. Parents are invited to bring a representative along. Notes must be taken at the meeting and shared later with the parents. The meeting must aim for a positive outcome for the child and not to suspend.

If no acceptable alternative to suspension is found then the setting manager must give both verbal and written notice of time related suspension to the parent, meanwhile the setting manager must ensure that continued resolution is sought and suitable adjustments are in place for the child's return.

Suspension of a disabled child

We have a statutory duty not to discriminate against a child on the basis of a protected characteristic. This includes suspending a child based on a disability. Ignorance of the law or claiming it was unknown that a child was disabled is no defence. However, if the child's behaviour places themselves or others at risk then the setting must take actions to avoid further harm. Time limited suspension may be applied to keep the child and/or others safe whilst finding a solution. Suspension is only used if reasonable steps and planned adjustments are first used to help resolve the situation. Without this action, suspension of a child with SEND may constitute disability discrimination (Equality Act 2010). A decision to

suspend a disabled child must be clearly evidenced, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and targeted. Plans and intervention must be recorded on the child's file and *9.12b SEN Support - Action plan*. If little or no progress is made during the suspension period, the following steps are taken.

1. The setting manager sends a written/electronic invite to the parents, a local authority representative and any relevant external agencies to attend a review meeting. Each attendee must be made aware that the meeting is to avoid the situation escalating further and to find a positive solution.
2. After the meeting the setting manager continues to maintain weekly contact with the parents and local authority to seek a solution.
3. Suitable arrangements offer the parent continued support and advice during the suspension. The setting manager reviews the situation fortnightly and provides their line manager with a monthly update.

Expulsion

In some exceptional circumstances a child may be expelled due to:
- a termination of their childcare agreement as explained in *9.1d Childcare terms and conditions*
- if despite applying a range of interventions (including reasonable adjustments), the setting has been unable to adequately meet the child's needs or cannot protect the health, safety and well-being of the child and/or others.

Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting

We do not tolerate behaviour demonstrating dislike, prejudice, discriminatory attitudes or action towards any individual/group. This includes those living outside the UK (xenophobia). This also applies to behaviour towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.

Allegations of discriminatory remarks or behaviour made in the setting by any adult will be taken seriously. The perpetrator will be asked to stop the behaviour and failure to do so may result in the adult being asked to leave the premises. Where a parent makes discriminatory or prejudice remarks to staff at any time, or other persons while on the premises, this is recorded on the child's file and is reported to the setting manager. The procedure is explained and the parent is asked to comply while on the premises. An 'escalatory' approach will be taken with those who continue to exhibit this behaviour. The second stage comprises a letter to the parent requesting them to sign a written agreement not to make discriminatory remarks or behave in discriminatory or prejudice ways; the third stage may be considering withdrawing the child's place.

09.12 Procedure: Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND

Graduated approach

Early Initial identification and support (identifying special educational needs)
- Ongoing formative assessment forms part of a continuous process for observing, assessing, planning and reviewing children's progress.
- Key persons meet half termly to review children's progress. Key persons complete a checkpoint assessment around their key children's birthday. The SENCO and setting manager also review children's needs half termly.
- Children identified as having difficulty with one or more area of development should be given support by applying some simple strategies and resources.
- For most children application of some simple differentiation approaches will be enough to build confidence and help the child develop
- If despite applying differentiated strategies a child continues to struggle and is showing significantly more difficulty with learning than their peers or has a disability which requires specific adjustments, then the key person should raise a concern with the setting's SENCo/setting manager and the child's parents. *9.12a SEN Support: Initial record of concern form* should be completed.

Observation and assessment of children's SEN
- Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or their progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting.
- Information can be collated from formal checks such as the progress check at age two, observations from parents and observation and assessment by the setting of the child's progress.
- When specialist advice has been sought externally, this is used to help determine whether or not a child has a special educational need (SEN).
- The child's key person and SENCo/Manager use this information to decide if the child has a special educational need.
- If the decision is that the child does have a SEN and the parents are not already aware of a concern, then the information is shared with them. Once parents have been informed, they should be fully engaged in the process, contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.

Planning intervention
- Everyone involved with the child should be given an opportunity to share their views. Parents should be encouraged to share their thoughts on the child's difficulties and be involved in the decision as to what will happen next.
- A first intervention option may be to carry on with applying differentiated support and to review the child's progress at an agreed date. If the child's needs are more complex, then the decision maybe to go straight ahead and prepare *09.12b SEN support: Action plan* with detailed evidence-based interventions being applied straight away and simultaneously external referrals made.

- If relevant, then the child should be appropriately included in development of the action plan but only at a level which reflects their stage of comprehension.
- *09.12b SEN support: Action plan* described below, ensures that children that are identified, or suspected of having a SEN will receive the right level of support and encouragement with their learning and development as early as possible.

Involving the child
- The SEND Code of Practice supports the rights of children to be involved in decisions about their education.
- Inclusion of children with SEND helps build self-confidence and trust in others.
- Ascertaining children's views may not be easy, a range of strategies will be needed.
- Accurate assessment helps identify children's strengths and possible barriers to learning.
- The key person and setting manager/SENCo work in partnership with parents and other agencies to involve the child wherever appropriate.
- Children are involved at appropriate stages of the assessment and to their level of ability.
- Establishing effective communication is essential for the child's involvement.
- *09.12b SEN support: Action plan*, should show what support is required to help achieve outcomes for the child and detail the frequency of these interventions and who will apply them and with what resources.
- A review date (at least termly) should be agreed with the parents so that the child's progress can be reviewed against expected outcomes and next steps agreed.
- A copy of the plan is stored in the child's file so that any other member of staff or an inspector looking at the file will see how the child is progressing and what interventions have been or are being applied.

SEN action plan
- If a child has more complex needs, receives enhanced support or external agencies become involved, a SEN action plan should be written.
- If a child requires specific medical interventions during their time in the setting, *04.2a Health care plan form* should also be completed and integrated into the general plans to ensure the child's medical needs are known and safely met.
- The plan should provide an accessible summary of the child's needs, which can be used if further assessment is required including a statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) Assessment, and development of an EHC plan.
- If external agencies are already involved at this stage, then they should also be invited to help decide on what appropriate interventions are needed to help meet outcomes for the child. The SENCO/setting manager should take the lead in coordinating further actions including preparation of the action plan and setting short-term targets.
- Where there are significant emerging concerns (or an identified special educational need or disability) targeted action plans are formulated that relate to a clear set of expected outcomes and stretching targets.
- *09.12b SEN support: Action plan*, highlights areas in which a child is progressing well; areas in which some additional support might be needed and any areas where there

is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate a special educational need or disability). It describes the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns.

- Planned intervention should be based on the best possible evidence and have the required impact on progress with longer-term goals covering all aspects of learning and development and shorter-term targets meeting goals.
- The plan should focus on the needs of the child, the true characteristics, preferences, and aspirations of the child and involvement of the parents with a clear set of targets and expected outcomes for the child. Effective planning at this stage should help parents and children express their needs, wishes, and goals:
  - focus on the child as an individual and not their SEN label
  - be easy for children to understand and use clear ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon
  - highlight the child strengths and capacities
  - enable the child, and those who know them best, to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in the future
  - tailor support to the needs of the individual
  - organise assessments to minimise demands on families
  - bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach

- If the child fails to make progress and multi-agency support is sought, then it is at this point that Early Help assessment should be considered.

Record keeping

If a child has or is suspected of having a SEN, a dated record should be kept of:

- the initial cause for concern and the source of this information, (the progress check at age two and/or outcomes of previous interventions). 09.12a SEN support: Initial record of concern form can also be used for this purpose drawing information from other sources
- the initial discussion with parents raising the possibility of the child's SEN
- the views of the parents and other relevant persons including, wherever possible, the child's views;
- the procedures followed with regard to the Code of Practice to meet the child's SEND e.g. SEN action plan, referrals to external agencies and for statutory assessment
- evidence of the child's progress and any identified barriers to learning
- advice from other relevant professionals; and all subsequent meetings with parents and other persons and any subsequent referrals

Records may include

- observation and monitoring sheets
- expressions of concern
- risk assessments
- access audits (*01.1b*)

- health care plans (including guidelines for administering medication)
- SEN action plans
- meetings with parents and other agencies
- additional information from and to outside agencies
- agreements with parents
- guidelines for the use of children's individual equipment; Early help CAF referrals
- referral to the local authority identifying a child's special educational needs and request for statutory Education, Health, Care (EHC) needs assessment; and a copy of an EHC plan

Seeking additional funding/enhanced/top up

If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core funding, then it will be at this point that the evidence collated will be used to apply for top up/enhanced funding from the local authority's inclusion fund. If a new or existing child is disabled, then the setting should check if the family is in receipt or have applied for Disability Living Allowance. If so, the setting will be able to apply to their local authority for the local Disability Access Fund.

Statutory education, health and care (EHC) assessment and plan

Statutory assessment
- If a child has not made progress, then the next steps may be for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
- If a child is under compulsory school age, the local authority will conduct an EHC needs assessment if they consider that the child's needs cannot be met within the resources normally available to the early years setting.
- Children aged under age two are eligible where an assessment has indicated that the child is likely to have SEN which requires an EHC plan when they reach compulsory school age.
- When a child's needs appear to be sufficiently complex, or the evidence suggest specialist intervention then the local authority is likely to conclude that an EHC plan is necessary
- The local authority should fully involve the parent and must seek advice from the setting in making decisions about undertaking an EHC assessment and preparing an EHC plan.
- Settings should prepare by collating information about the child's SEND including:
  - documentation on the child's progress in the setting
  - interventions and support provided to date
  - evidence of external agency assessment, support and recommendations
  - parental views and wishes (and where appropriate those of the child)

- The information will then be submitted to the local authority to allow them to accurately assess the child in the context of the support already given.
- The local authority must inform the child's parents of their decision within six weeks of receiving a request for an assessment and give its reasons for their decision. If the local authority decides to conduct an assessment, it must ensure the child's parents are fully included right from the beginning and are invited to contribute their views. If the local authority subsequently decides not to conduct an assessment it must

then inform the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal.

- If the local authority decides that a statutory EHC plan is not necessary, it must notify the parents and inform the provider, giving the reasons for the decision. This notification must take place within 16 weeks of the initial request or of the child having otherwise been brought to the local authority's attention.
- If the decision following an assessment is to compile an EHC plan the local authority should consult collaboratively with the parents in the preparation of the plan ensuring that their views and their child's preferences are taken into account and that plans describe positively what the child can do and has achieved to date.
- Plans are evidenced based and focus on short term outcomes and long-term aspirations for the child including family and community support. Parents have the right to request a particular provision for their child to be named within their EHC plan.
- If an early years setting is named, the local authority must fund this provision. They cannot force a setting to take a child and can only name the provision in the EHC if the setting agrees.
- Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under age five at least every three to six months. Such reviews would complement the duty to carry out a review at least annually but may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child. The child's parents must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

External intervention and support
Where external agency intervention has been identified to help support a child with SEND then this intervention should be recommended in writing by a suitably reliable source such as a speech and language therapist, paediatrician or educational psychologist.

09.13 Procedure: Prime times – Transition to school

Moving on to school is a major transition in a child's life involving separation from familiar adults and children. Older children have a more secure understanding of 'people permanence' and are able to approach new experiences with confidence. However, they need preparation if they are to approach transition to school with confidence and an awareness of what to expect.

Partnership with schools

- Details of the school that a child will be attending are recorded along with the name of the reception class teacher, if known.
- Every effort is made to forge and maintain strong links with all schools that children may attend. The setting manager will approach schools in order to open lines of communication where these have not previously existed.
- Details of the school's transition or settling in procedures are kept by the setting and are referred to so that members of staff are familiar with them and can develop a consistent approach to transition with teachers, parents and children.
- Teachers are welcomed into the setting and sufficient time is made for them to spend both with the child, their parents and with the key person, to discuss and share information that will support the child's transition to school.
- A child's development summary and learning journey record is forwarded to the school along with other information that will aid transition and settling in. Parents receive a copy of this.
- Any action plans relating to a child's additional needs are also shared, where this is in place.
- Other formal documentation such as safeguarding information is prepared in line with procedure *07.6 Transfer of records*.

Partnership with parents

- Key persons discuss transition to school with parents and set aside time to discuss learning and development summaries. Parents are encouraged to contribute to summaries.
- Key persons will discuss with parents how they are preparing their child for school and will share information about how the setting is working in partnership with the school to aid transition.
- Key persons will make clear to parents the information that will be shared with the school, for example, information regarding child protection and work that has taken place to ensure the child's welfare.

Increasing familiarity for children

Where the setting is on, or adjacent to a school site, there will be opportunities for children to become familiar with staff and school premises, for example shared use of outdoor and indoor spaces, activities and resources.

Where possible, the key person or parents will take the child to visit the new school, if this is the school's transition policy.

If there are several schools in a catchment area, or the setting is not within a reasonable distance of the school, other means of familiarisation will be explored. This could be through videos, photographs or other information about the school that can be shown within the setting. Staff may borrow resources from the schools and will use these with the children.

Preparing children for leaving

Children and parents form bonds with adults and children in the setting and will need preparation for separating from the relationships they have formed.

The child's last day should be prepared for in advance and marked with a special celebration leaver service (graduation)and a leavers party that acknowledges that the child is moving on.

Parents are welcome to bring the child for the occasional brief visit, as separations often take time to complete. Sometimes children need the reassurance that their nursery/pre-school is still there and that they are remembered.

09.14 Procedure: Progress check at age two

- A template for completing the two-year-old progress check is provided as *09.15a Progress check at age two* template.
- The key person is central to the progress check and must be the person completing it.
- Settings should take guidance from their local authority as to when the progress check at age two is completed; if no such guidance is provided, the progress check is completed when the child is between 26 and 30 months old. The child should be attending the setting for at least 1 term before the check is completed.
- Once the timing of the child's progress check is confirmed, parents are invited to discuss their child's progress at a mutually convenient time.
- The setting must seek to engage both parents and make allowance for parents who do not live with their child to be involved.

Completing the progress check at age two

- On-going observational assessment informs the progress check and must be referred to.
- Children's contributions are included in the report. Staff must be 'tuned in' to the ways in which very young children, or those with speech or other developmental delay or disability, communicate.
- Where any concerns about a child's learning and development are raised these are discussed with the parents, the SENCo and the setting manager.
- If concerns arise about a child's welfare, they must be addressed through *06. Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults* procedures.
- The key person must be clear about the aims of the progress check as follows:
    - to review a child's development in the three prime areas of the EYFS
    - to ensure that parents have a clear picture of their child's development
    - to enable practitioners to understand the child's needs and, with support from practitioners, enhance development at home
    - note areas where a child is progressing well and identify any areas where progress is less than expected
    - describe actions the provider intends to take to address any developmental concerns (working with other professionals as appropriate)

Further guidance

- Early Years Entitlements: Operational guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018)
  https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718181/Early_years_entitlements-operational_guidance.pdf
- Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers
  https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (DfE and DoH 2015)
  www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25
- Ready, Steady, SENCO (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2018)

Legal References

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE and DHSC 2014)
- Equality Act 2010
- Childcare Act 2006

Appendix 1 – Forms and documents associated with these procedures

The following forms and documents support our Childcare Practise procedures and are located in the digital and hard copy Policy folder.

09.01a	Little Fishes Prospectus
09.01b	Application form *(includes privacy statement and data consent / reference to 07.01 Family privacy notice)*
09.01c	Registration form *(includes signing terms and conditions)*
09.01d	Little Fishes Terms and conditions
09.01e	Settling pack (includes background form)
09.01f	Welcome pack
09.05a	On-entry assessment form
09.05b	Checkpoints for 2-year-olds
09.05c	Checkpoints for 3-year-olds
09/05d	Checkpoints for 4-year-olds
09.12a	SEN support: record of concern
09.12b	SEN support: action plan
09.14a	Transition to school report
09.15a	2-Year-old check form

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Name of Manager: Amber Delves
Signature:

A. Delves.