

## 1.3 Settling in Playgroup – Policy and practice

We want all children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of care, help and friendship and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in the Playgroup

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our settling procedures aim to help parents to help their children to feel comfortable in the Playgroup, to benefit from what it has to offer and to be confident that their parents will return at the end of the session / day.

In order to accomplish this, we will:

- Encourage parents to visit the Playgroup with their children during the weeks before an admission is planned.
- Introduce flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families and children.
- Allocate a Keyworker to each family, to liaise day to day and complete Learning Journal. Children may develop a closer relationship with their Keyworker, or with another member of staff.
- Make clear to the families from the outset that they will be supported in the Playgroup for as long as it takes to settle their child there.
- Reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the Playgroup.
- Introduce new families into the Playgroup on an individual basis, for example, two new children a day for a week rather than ten new children all at once.
- Encourage children, where appropriate, to separate from their parents, for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.
- Find out information about a child's routines, family and interests in order to provide the appropriate resources to help children feel relaxed and settled. This will be recorded in the "All About Me" section of the Learning Journal.
- Give each child a Home-Contact Book for Playgroup staff and parents/carers to pass information about the child's experiences, so they can share and celebrate and build a strong relationship between Playgroup and Home.

- Where a child is finding settling in challenging, we will arrange to meet with the parent to work together to build an individual routine to help that child part from their parent (eg bringing in something belonging to a parent, looking at photos of home)

### **Items from Home**

Children are welcome to bring comfort items from home, for example a favourite teddy, car or muslin. However we do not allow the use of “dummies” in playgroup, due to the detrimental effect they have on speech development and children’s teeth. Please be aware that we cannot be held responsible for any items brought from home that get lost or damaged.

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