

FIRST STEPS (BATH)

The role of the key person

A child attending day care at First Steps Centres is allocated a key person from the time they first start at the Centre. It has been shown that when children have a close relationship with an adult within the nursery, they feel more confident and safer within it, settle more readily and are more confident to explore and try out new things. We ensure that children build relationships with multiple early years practitioners. This approach guarantees that children continue to receive excellent care and support even when their key person is unavailable.

The role of the key person is therefore to:

- Develop secure, trusting relationships with both their key children and their parents and carers.
- Celebrate what the child can already do, as well as acknowledging early identification of need and planning for appropriate, tailored support.
- Provide a secure base for the key children, both physically and emotionally.
- Ensure their key children receive a level of individual care and attention within the larger nursery community.
- Act as an advocate for the child in the family, especially when working with external agencies.

This includes:

- Forming a judgment about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development. Contributing ideas for activities to be planned which will support individual children's development. Using observations of all children made by the key person and others to develop a rounded view of the child's development.
- Regularly reviewing the children's development and setting likely next steps in learning for each child.
- Ensuring that parents/carers receive regular oral feedback on their child's progress.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the child's care needs.
- Arranging child progress review meetings. These may be alongside the Manager or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) and be more frequent if there are identified child and family needs.
- Completing the child's 2-year review with parents, and Health Visitor or other professionals as needed.
- Making additional observations on the child, as requested by the Manager or SENCo
- Alongside the Manager or SENCo, ensuring that the services provided for the child are working in a coordinated way.
- Ensuring that any individual plans for children (1 Page Profiles, My Plans or TOPS Targeted Outcome Plans) are followed.
- The Key Person may have extra roles as identified within a child's care plan or because of additional funding for an individual child.

To ensure effective practice:

- Each child has a Key Person; however, children can also get to know other members of the team with Early years practitioners working closely together through free flow.
- A Key Buddy system is in place to act as the child's Key Person in their named person is absent.
- Parents are provided with both formal and informal opportunities to speak to their child's Key Person.
- Parents are made aware of our open-door policy to actively encourage them to be part of the First Steps nursery.

Other Policies this will link to:

- 3d Transition Procedure Policy

Policy drafted by Ann Thurgood, Children's Services Manager

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