

## SETTLING IN TO CHILDCARE, POLICY AND PRACTICE.

Daisy and Rainbow Childcare recognises that parents and carers are the first educators and carers of their children, we need to learn about their child from them to ensure we can best care for their child in their absence.

We want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parent carers (from here on referred to as parent), to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship, and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed with us.

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

We have reviewed our practices to ensure that the children's needs are foremost in our minds and in the light of necessary learning following the COVID19 pandemic. During this period, we experienced children confidently accessing our play spaces without the immediate attendance of the parent. We experienced the children being able to confidently wave goodbye to their parent and then to greet them at the close of their session. We experienced children being more settled when there were not other parents coming into the room, or indeed their own parents. We look forward to being able to welcome parents into the setting more easily however now recognise the value of this being by invitation only giving us the opportunity to structure the emotional support for the children.

### Pre-Registration

- We will provide all parents who enquire about our services with a video introducing our setting and our key pedagogies and ethos for caring for their children. Information about funding and our information booklet will be attached. Parents will be requested to complete a pre-registration Google form at that stage. Upon receipt a childcare administrator will advise regarding availability and confirm the place within 2 months of the agreed start date.
- Upon receipt of an application for a place, in alignment with our admissions policy, the application will be placed on our waiting list with Email acknowledgement given to the parent to ensure clarity.
- We will not normally offer a place to a child when they are knowingly being placed into our care for a period of less than 8 weeks. We believe that a child may not be best served by such short time care nor that our team will be best placed to fully support their needs over this time. In times of emergency or specific need the management team are able to bring discretion to bear.

### Pop in Visits

- When we consider that a parent may need to visit the setting before the Zoom Meeting or prior to Registering we may offer the opportunity to attend a "Pop in Visit". This visit will be short in nature of just 15 minutes to allow the parent to take a quick look with their child. Times will be agreed to suit the setting – Rainbow – 8.30am/ 12.30pm/ 4.15pm Daisy 10.30am/ 1.30pm, or at the close of the day.
- No visits to the setting will be offered other than with an appointment.

### Registration

- Confirmation of a child's place will be made within 2 months of a child's proposed start date, and no more than 6 months ahead. This will be communicated with parents via email with a request for the Registration fee to be made payable within 10 working days. If no payment is made then the place will be allocated to another child
- The Confirmation of start date will be agreed based upon our availability rather than upon parental immediacy of need, although we will seek to meet those needs as much as is possible.

- Information will be sent to parents about how we settle children. This information will be relevant to their child's age and stage. [HERE](#)
- Allocation of a place will be made with close communication in place between the Coordinator and the childcare Administrator.
- We will introduce new families into the group on a staggered basis, avoiding more than two new children on any one session. Priority will be given based upon family need. Please also refer to the Admissions Policy.
- To enable effective ongoing settling within the sessions for the child we will not be booking a child in for fewer than 2 separate days nor for fewer than 4 hours (2 hours at Daisy), on any one day.

### **Zoom Induction Meeting**

- The date will be agreed for an Initial Zoom Meeting with the parents upon receipt of the child's registration form and All About Me documents.
- The Zoom meeting will be planned to take place approximately a month before the child starts to give time for a settling in period if required.
- The Zoom Induction meeting is arranged by the Coordinator, via an initial phone call, to be at a time that is mutually convenient for the setting and the parent.
- The Zoom meeting is led by the Coordinator or the keyperson and focuses upon the two-way sharing of information. The keyperson seeks to underpin their early knowledge of the child provided in the registration form and All About Me document.
- Following this meeting parents are emailed a copy of the [Settling Books](#)

### **First Settle**

- The First Settle will be booked with the parents following conversation with the Nursery Deputy, Coordinator or Team Lead
- The keyperson will be agreed in advance and will lead the First Settle with the parents. If the keyperson is absent a keyperson within the same family group will be selected or the settle delayed.
- Parent/s and child will be greeted on their First Settle by the keyperson. The First Settle will normally take place in the conservatory at Daisy and in the Lobby or garden at Rainbow. This time is designed to be informal, and play based around the child with opportunity for the child to see a trusting relationship grow between their carer and the practitioner. The parent will be encouraged to find a comfortable spot to sit which will allow their child to see them as a safe place and to experiment with exploring away from them. The time frame anticipated for this first stage is between 10 – 30 minutes.
- Following this first stage the keyperson will gently and skilfully encourage the child to come and play in the main room with them. The parent will be asked to wait or to return within an agreed timeframe.
- Dedicated time will be given from the keyperson to the child to ensure they start to get to know them and that they have a chance in their own time to feel and explore this new environment. Careful observation will support the practitioner to be able to step back at appropriate times.
- All parents will be given a pack with copies of our key literature supporting our practice [HERE](#) which can be read whilst the child is playing.
- We will encourage parents to seek out alternative childcare for any younger siblings to enable an effective settle, although will welcome younger siblings when necessary.
- For most 3- and 4-year-olds their second visit will be considered their Start Date at the setting without their parents present. Parents will be assured that we will contact them if the child is finding it hard to settle.

### **Settling Babies and Toddlers at Rainbow**

- When a baby is settling at Rainbow the first session will take place solely in the lobby.

- The second session will take place in the main playroom, again with the parent present
- All future settle visits will be made without the parent present and for periods of time negotiated with the parent over the course of the week prior to the child starting formally.
- During settling sessions parents must remain easily contactable and available to collect their child if requested.

### **Key support strategies to enable effective settling in**

- We recognise that a child's separation from their key carer will cause several possible emotions and behaviours for both the child and the carer. The factors which impact upon this will relate to security of attachment between key carer and child and in turn to any home circumstances which may impinge upon this.
- We are also very aware that the parents' confidence in our ability to care for their child will reduce any transmissible anxiety they may be feeling. We seek to meet this need through the provision of information about our setting and by building relationship with the parent from initial enquiry to the point their child enters our main play space without their immediate presence.
- We use the 4 key parenting functions from THRIVE to support both children and parents currently – see separate "THRIVE" policy for further detail.

#### **1. Attune**

*Parent We will give parents time to talk about their feelings and do our best to attune to what they are saying and demonstrating.*

*Child We will go the child's level, stop, observe, listen and attend, gaining eye contact as appropriate to build trust*

#### **2. Contain**

*Parent We will seek to give parents an understanding that we can support both them and their child and that we are able to deal with and understand their emotions.*

*Child We will ensure that children are introduced to the Golden Rules which will give them clear, simple and understandable boundaries. Should a child be upset, we may offer physical containment in the form of an arm around the shoulder, hug or a period of holding if required. A child will be reassured that the adult is there "to keep them safe".*

#### **3. Soothe**

*Parent We will support parents with soothing words, tissues and touch as appropriate.*

*Child We will use caring and soothing language and touch to enable a child to be able to calm enough to be able to play and "do".*

#### **4. Validate**

*Parent We will make it clear that whatever emotions the parent may be feeling are normal and OK. We will attempt to name the emotion and ensure that the parent feels reassured that their child is safe with us and to trust us that we would contact them further if we were unable to soothe their child's possible distress.*

*Child We would name the emotions for a child following observation of their behaviours "I can see that you are sad / cross / upset that your mummy has gone. I can see that it is hard for you."*

- Parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling in will be given reassurance and positive progress will be highlighted. A child in this scenario may be offered targeted support through a My plan or an Enhanced Settle Plan, which may include the parent being present in the playroom for planned periods of time.. A phased or deferred attendance may be considered.

## Child Handovers

- To enable children to be able to recognise our setting as a secure, safe place of play, care, and learning, where they are supported by a team of known trusted adult carers, we have decided to restrict parental entry to the main play spaces other than by specific invitation.
- At the start of a session children are greeted by a keyperson from their keygroup. At Daisy this will take place at the main conservatory entrance doors. At Rainbow this will take place behind the gate at the main automatic entry doors.
- Parents will be required to ring the bell for their key group to ensure that the door safety is monitored and controlled.
- When children are collected at the close of the session parents will greet their children from outside the conservatory / lobby.
- Parents who require a longer conversation will be invited inside.
- Longer conversations with parents will take place via an organised Zoom meeting or via telephone.

Last Review: May 2019  
Current Review Sept 21  
Signed: 