



SETTLING POLICY

Woodpeckers Preschool CIO wants children to feel safe, stimulated and happy and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with our pre-school.

We aim to make our Preschool a welcoming place, where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families. Before a child starts at our Preschool we offer new family visits. These visits give the child and their family a chance to come in during the summer and have a look around without being overwhelmed by lots of new faces. Amanda Swift and Sarah Bartholomew (who both work full time) spend time with the whole family giving everyone a chance to ask any questions and get to know 2 familiar faces.

We allocate a key person, a named member of staff assigned to an individual child to support their development and act as the key point of contact with that child's parents/carers. We aim to introduce the keyperson on the child's first session.

When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into our pre-school. If the child has a special comforter/ toy they are encouraged to bring it in with them until they are completely settled. Once settled they may still bring it in but they are encouraged to put it in their tray. We, as much of the sector, operate a drop off at the door approach. If we are unable to settle the child we will call the parents and if after a few sessions the child is still unsettled we will discuss other strategies to help with the settling process. These may be things such as, coming in earlier before the majority of the children, later after the first initial rush has quietened down or a parent/ carer coming in for a short time to until they have settled. Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.

We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.



When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.

We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from our Preschool.

We reserve the right not to accept a child into our Preschool without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.

This policy was adopted on 1st September 2009 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed *Steven White*
Steven White (Chairperson)
Trustee of Woodpeckers Preschool CIO
26th August 2025