

The Role of the Key Person

Introduction

This factsheet explores the role of the key person in a setting and how they will support your child and work in partnership with you.

Key points

The importance of the key person is highlighted in English and Welsh childcare policy.

The key person is a named person who has responsibility in a setting for meeting your child's individual needs.

If you are using a childminder then they are the child's key person.

They will get to know you and your child, finding out about your child's preferences and routines and will be the person that shares information with you about what your child has done during the session and information about their learning and development.

The key person role is important as research and evidence show that children thrive when their needs are met by special people that they know, trust and respect. Familiarity, pattern and predictability support children's personal development and helps them understand who they are and what they can do. Children can concentrate and learn more effectively if not under stress or pressure so having a key person who is attentive and knows their child well will support children in their personal, social and emotional development.

Children learn by observing and being with others. The key person is an important role model for the child who they can relate to and rely on.

The key person observes your child to identify how they learn through their play, their next aspect of development, what their interests are, whether there is any cause for concern or need for extra support.

The key person supports physical needs too, helping with issues like nappy changing, toileting and dressing.

What does this mean for me?

The key person works alongside parents and carers to ensure that there is continuity of care for the child thus supporting the child's emotional well-being.

The key person will want you to share information about your child, the more you can tell them the better the relationship they will be able to form with your child and plan how to meet their needs.

The key person is someone you can talk to about any concerns, they will know your child well and will be able to provide advice and support with all aspects of learning and development.

You should be offered regular times to talk to your child's key person and look at their learning and development records.

What can you do to support your child?

Talk to your child about their key person so that they know they can go to them for help.

Keep the key person updated with any changes in routines or changes in your child's home life, for example, if you are moving house or expecting a sibling, as your child's key person will be able to support your child through transition times.

Share any new interests your child may have or special experiences they may have taken part in as their key person will be able to follow up on these in the setting.

Tell your child's key person about any 'wow' moments your child has had at home and when they meet developmental milestones. Together you can celebrate your child's achievements and plan suitable next steps to support them.

Statutory Guidance

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014

www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework

The Foundation Phase – Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales

<http://learning.wales.gov.uk/docs/learningwales/publications/130424-framework-for-childrens-learning-en.pdf>