Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Organisation
Providers must plan and organise their systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

14. KEY PERSONS

Policy Statement

We aim to make Feltwell Playgroup 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.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the setting.

Research shows that a key person approach is beneficial to all those involved in the setting - the child, parents/carers and staff – as it helps the child to settle and thrive and gives parents/carers the confidence in knowing that staff are committed to ensuring that each families individual needs are met and secure relationships are formed.

The key person role is set out in the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each setting must offer a key person for each child. However, it is important to realise that a key person does NOT:

- Shadow their allocated children throughout the session;
- Liaise with only their key group of children;
- Prevent other adults from developing a relationship with their key children; or
- Prevent their key children from forming appropriate bonds with other adults within the setting

Procedures

These set out a model for developing a key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children who are in our setting:

- A key worker has a special responsibility for a small group of children.
- When each child starts, the manager is their initial allocated key person. This will most likely change within the first two to four weeks of the child starting and may change again if the child forms a greater attachment to another staff member.
- The manager is responsible for the induction of the family and will introduce them to the key person who is responsible for settling the child into our setting.
- The key person acts as the key contact for the parents/carers and has links with other carers involved with the child - such as a childminder - and co-ordinates the sharing of appropriate information about the child's development with those carers.
- The key worker will be non-judgemental and ensure that the needs of each child are recognised within the Playgroup.
- The key person works with the parent to plan and deliver a personalised plan for the child's well-being, care and learning if needed.
- We promote the role of the key person as the child's primary carer in our setting and as the basis for establishing relationships with other staff and children.
- A key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents/carers to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home.
- The key person will aim to develop a day-to-day rapport with parents/carers, being available to answer any queries and informing them of their child's activities and progress.

- To ensure that each child and parent has a contact in the absence of the child's key person, all staff are aware of each child's individual needs and are able to assist either child or parent whenever needed - including comforting and reassuring the child at any time of distress.

Settling in

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information such as our Welcome Pack, as well as the opportunity to visit the setting with or without their child and an opportunity to talk to a senior member of staff.
- When each child starts, the manager is their initial allocated key person. This will most likely change within the first two to four weeks of the child starting and may change again if the child forms a greater attachment to another staff member. The manager welcomes and look after the child and their parents/carers at the child's first session and during the settling-in process. This is subject to Covid-19 related risk assessment for the setting.
- In some cases, we may offer a home visit by the manager, to ensure all relevant information about the child can be made known.
- When a child starts to attend, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents/carers and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the first session (and possibly more) gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope. This is subject to Covid-19 related risk assessment for the setting.
- 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. This is subject to Covid-19 related risk assessment for the setting.
- We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left. We expect that parents/carers will work with the staff regarding the settling-in period, until their child can stay happily without them.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting 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 by	Feltwell Playgroup
On	20.03.2026
Date to be reviewed	(on or before) 20.03.2027
Signed on behalf of the provider	J.I.
Name of signatory	Jonathan Irving
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Committee Chairperson