

Settling in Pre-School Policy

We recognise that starting Pre-School may be distressing for some children, so it is important that we make the transition as painless as possible. We want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, 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 at Aston Pre-School. We also want parents to feel welcome and involved from the beginning.

In order to accomplish this, we aim to create a partnership with parents in the following ways:

1. By creating opportunities for the exchange of information, using among other resources a starter pack. Parents must advise Pre-School of all relevant information e.g. Dietary needs, medical information, contact details etc. By ensuring plentiful opportunities for parents to inform the Pre-School about their children's current achievements and interests. It is also important that we are aware of any fears or anxieties the child may have. Children may wish to bring something familiar from home to help the settling in process.
2. By encouraging parents to visit the Pre-School with their children during the weeks before an admission is planned. Visits will be arranged for all new children and parent/carer. All children and parents are invited to an induction morning before they are due to start pre-school.
3. By introducing flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families and children.
4. By making clear to families from the outset that they will be welcome and supported in the Pre-School for as long as it takes to settle their child there.
5. By reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the Pre-School.
6. By introducing new families on a staggered basis, for example at the most two new children a day for a week rather than ten new children all at once.
7. By encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.
8. Children are placed in keyworker groups which enables them to form a strong bond with one member of staff. This helps children to gain a sense of stability in the absence of their parent/carer. It also enables parents/carers to build a relationship with a particular member of staff.

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our settling procedures aim to help parents and children to feel comfortable at Pre-School, and to ensure that children can benefit from what the group has to offer and feel confident that their parents will return at the end of the session/day. Prompt collection of children at the end of the session is essential.