



Settling in Policy



Aim

Starting Little Jesters can be a big step for both the child and their Parent/Carer, therefore we wish to support the family by offering a settling in period.

Children develop in individual ways and at varying rates and this is why we offer a settling in procedure that is flexible in order to meet those needs. At Little Jesters, every interaction is based on caring professional relationships and respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of the children and their families. The Little Jesters staff work together with the family to provide the best care and learning environment for all children. It is very important to us that each child feels safe and secure when in the care of the Little Jesters staff. We recognise that leaving a child for possibly the first time, can be difficult for Parents/Carers and so we encourage them to come into Little Jesters and spend some time together with their child before s/he is taken into the care of the Little Jesters team.

For the child to have the best possible care it is vital for Parents/Carers to share with the staff, their knowledge about their child's individual needs, likes, dislikes and routine. This can be done on the registration forms and verbally when the family is introduced to the Key Person. We want parents to have confidence in both their child's well-being and in their role as active partners within the Pre-School. Children feel a real sense of belonging in the setting when their Parents/Carers are also involved in it.

Key Person

Every child attending Little Jesters will be allocated a Key Person. This member of staff will have special responsibilities for working with a small number of children and for developing a genuine bond with the child and their Parents/Carer. The Key Person will have an in depth knowledge of each child and it is with her/him that sharing of information is most important.

The Key Person will help the child to become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it. They will also encourage your child to explore and learn, celebrating successes and building confidence. This information will always be regularly shared with Parents/Carers.

The Key Person will work with the Parent/Carer to keep the personal records up to date, be responsible for keeping each child's learning journal, observation and assessment information as well as for writing reports on the child.

Settling in Sessions

The following is a guideline for settling in, however we understand that children are individuals and therefore we are flexible in the way Parents/Carers wish to introduce their child to Little Jesters.

First Visit

The first visit will last for around one hour with the Parent/Carer accompanying the child throughout this time. There will be an opportunity to meet the staff team and the child's Key Person, have a play and get a feel for the environment. Parent/Carers are encouraged to talk to the Little Jesters staff as this enables your child to see there is a relationship developing between the adults. Please bring a favourite toy or comfort object for your child to have if you feel that it will help. At the end of this first session Parents/Carers & child will leave together.

Second Visit

On the second visit, we would ask that the Parent/Carer spends a little time settling the child into Little Jesters before leaving them to play. Parent/Carers are asked to return 20 minutes before the end of the session to meet the child's key person and discuss any concerns. This is also a good opportunity to make sure that all the child's documents and contacts are up to date and current. It is then that Parent/Carers will also be advised if the child needs a longer settling in period or if the next visit should be normal session times and arrangements.

Please note that the above settling in procedures are only a guide as all children have different needs.

It is important to us that all Parents/Carers are secure in the knowledge that all staff will support each child and family when joining Little Jesters and that Little Jesters and Parents/Carers are a partnership of mutual respect and shared goals.

Alterations

We will following any current government guidelines in regards to infectious diseases (e.g. Covid) which may mean we will need to:

- the first visit is offered at the end of the school day when there are no other children present in the classroom.
- On the child's first session we will meet the parent and child at the Little Jesters gate and the Key Person will transition the child from their parent into the setting.

Reviewed Spring 2024

To be reviewed Spring 2026