

## **BHFT Key Carer Philosophy and Transition Policy**

### **Key Carer Philosophy**

A secure and close relationship is important to everyone and must be maintained throughout childhood into adult life. In order to encourage this strong emotional wellbeing, the Berkshire Healthcare nurseries have a key carer philosophy which assigns a designated member of staff to each child and their family.

The role of the key carer is to communicate with the parents, provide security and consistency to the child, feed them and change them and meet their needs. All staff based in a child's playroom will have a good knowledge of their individual needs, interests and dietary requirements.

### **What is the key carer philosophy?**

Children need sensitive and responsive adults to care for them. They need consistent and stable relationships with significant adults in order to enjoy their environment and branch out independently. A key carer is a designated member of staff who will spend quality time with a child. They will listen, observe, encourage and share significant events with them. The key carer approach focuses on enabling and supporting close attachments between individual children and individual nursery staff. This key carer will meet with a child's parents before starting the nursery to gain professional knowledge regarding the child's interests, needs and areas for development.

A key carer is also there for parents and families, as well as children. This is to support transitions and effective parent partnership.

### **Settling Children into the Nursery**

We aim to ensure that the first days of nursery life are as easy as possible for you and your child. To do this successfully, we have a settling in period for all new children.

Approximately 1 - 2 weeks before the child's start date, settling-in sessions will begin. A member of staff will contact parents to arrange these sessions.

On the first visit, the parent or guardian will stay with the child and meet their key carer to discuss daily routines and answer any questions you may have. Subsequent visits will involve your child being in the nursery for longer periods of time where they will gain more experience of nursery life.

We appreciate that parents and guardians may be concerned when their child starts the nursery as this is a significant life change for the family. We are happy for parents to telephone to gain feedback or reassurance.

If a child remains unsettled for a prolonged period of time and is unable to be comforted, the nursery will call the parent or guardian to discuss our concern. Where a child has not sufficiently settled prior to their planned start date, the key carer will discuss this with the parent or guardian.

The nursery is sensitive to the individual need of each child and understands that some children may need comforters, dummies etc at nursery. These are welcome in the nursery, however if these comforters are found to be delaying a child's development in any area, this will be discussed with parents.

Named comforters and toys are brought in at the parent's/guardian's own risk as they can get lost or broken at the nursery.

The nursery endeavours to support the family during what can be an unsettling time. We are here to help parents as well as children so please talk to the staff if you have any concerns.

### **Transitions From One Room to Another**

The nursery is aware that this can be a very sensitive time for the child and their parent/guardian. The child's parent/guardian will be informed of the transition procedure before the child moves into their new room.

Children are treated with great care and consideration. Staff put strategies in place to ensure that children moving rooms feel comfortable and cared for during their transition period.

The team leader in each room will allocate a key carer for each new child within their room.

Visits will be arranged between room staff in advance of the child moving into their new room. Settling in sessions will be organised based on the child's individual needs.

Before the child starts their visits, the parent/guardian is provided with written documentation regarding their child's transition, as well as introduced to the new key person, room and routine.

Children will move rooms based on different factors. These include the individual needs of children, availability and age.