**Key Worker Policy**

It is essential that children have an adult they can depend upon that they feel especially close to. Daily care routines for babies and young children are crucial to maintaining their Health and Safety. They are also the best way to help the children learn life skills by promoting language, social awareness and self-confidence.

The key worker system has been emphasised as central to achieving the best outcomes for children and parents. The key worker system gives babies and toddlers individual attention to their needs at times they can expect.

Key workers are responsible for small groups of children, their aim being to form a strong bond with the children when they first come to the nursery and to look after them during their settling in time and to provide support while at the nursery.

There will be times when the key worker is on holiday, unwell or on a different shift, however it is important for the children to retain a strong attachment to the rest of the group. A secondary key worker is chosen to look after the children during these times of absence. In the child’s room there is a display of all the key workers, their children and the secondary key workers, so at a quick glance you can see who is responsible for whom. We strongly encourage all staff to take responsibility for knowing

the children’s routines.

**How The Key Worker System Works At Steps Ahead**

* When a new child starts at Steps Ahead the parents are introduced to their child’s Key Worker on their settling in session or their first day at the nursery.
* The role of the key worker is to build a relationship with the child and family, to be their point of contact within the nursery.
* The key worker should identify the child’s individual needs and dietary requirements.
* The key worker is responsible for their key child’s development. They will be in charge of their key child’s online learning journal and keeping them up to date with the organisation of the observations and tracking their key child’s individual development.
* The key worker will be responsible for their key child’s learning and care and will tailor it to their key child’s individual needs.
* The key worker role is to observe their key child and plan their next learning and development requirement, working from the Early Years Foundation Stage.
* The key worker will help parents or carers to support their development at home. This could be by giving advice to the parents or carers or informing them of the next stage for their child’s development that we are working towards.
* The key workers role is to support the children and families with settling in and/or transition to another room. The key worker knows their key child/ren as an individual and can inform other members of staff about their needs and their development, while maintaining confidentiality.
* Through observing their key child’s development, if a key worker feels that their key child is not developing as they should, the key worker will inform the parents or carers of their concern and the nursery SENCO will be informed. The nursery SENCO will carry out observations on that child, with parents’ permission. After the observations are carried out and if the nursery still feels there is a concern, they will invite the parents or carers in for a meeting. The key worker, with the nursery SENCO, will help the family with contacting specialist support for their child.
* With the parents’ consent, the key worker/SENCO will liaise with other professionals from different nurseries or agencies which are involved in their key child’s development. These may happen outside of the nursery setting.
* Key workers will attend meetings for their Key Child where necessary. If the parents are not at the meeting, the key worker will keep the parents informed of all aspects of the meeting and of any outcomes of the meeting.
* In the event of the key worker being on holiday, a change of work pattern or off work due to illness, the secondary key worker system comes into effect. The secondary key worker will take over from the first key worker and continue with their development and to keep parents informed of any changes.
* Key workers are also responsible for attending and carrying out drop in sessions for their key children. This is a set time for key workers and parents to have time together and discuss their child’s development or to just have some time to talk.
* Keyworkers will change when the child moves rooms or a member of staff leaves, however the transition to a new keyworker will be done wherever possible at the child’s pace and sympathetically.