



# Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

## Policy #12

### KEY PERSON

## Introduction

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“The key person approach is an involvement, an individual and reciprocal commitment between a member of staff and a family. It is an approach which has clear benefits for children and parents, the key person and the nursery.” Elfer, Goldschmied and Selleck (2002)

A Key Person system is good practice when dealing with all children but particularly with children aged under 18 months. For babies the relationship with a key person or persons in that setting is especially significant. It is important that babies being cared for in childcare are looked after by as few adults as possible.

The Key Person coordinates information about the individual child’s needs and progress and shares this with parents/guardians and other staff members to maintain consistency and continuity of care. They provide a vital link with parents/carers and are often crucial in settling children in to the setting. Their role also includes coordinating planning and record keeping for individual children.

## Definitions/Glossary

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**Key Person:** *The term ‘Key Person’ is used rather than ‘Key Worker’. The term Key Worker is used to describe how the role is used for the purpose of enhancing smooth organisation and record keeping. This is only a part of being a Key Person which involves an emotional relationship as well.*

## Policy Statement

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We recognise that babies and young children in particular need time to make special relationships and build trust and that these special relationships make vital foundations for their development, their mental and physical health and their ability to wonder, think and learn.

Each child is allocated a Key Person who has a particular responsibility for their care. The Key Person gets to know the child well, monitors their progress, maintains development files and plans for the child’s individual needs.

Key Persons work very closely with parents from the very first contact until the child leaves the service - this ensures that the care the child receives at the service is as consistent as possible with the approach used at home. At the end of each day the Key Person is available to feed back any information to parents about the child’s day at the Centre.



## Procedures & Practices

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The Key Person:

- Links closely with parents/guardians in helping to settle the child in to the service –  
Note: it is important to ensure that there is plenty of time for the Key Person to get to know the child and parent/s in a relaxed manner
- Understands the child's needs and the parents'/carers' needs in relation to their child's care
- Understands cultural differences and key words from the child's own language if English is not the child's first language
- Bridges the worlds of home and the Centre
- Observes changes in the child and how their particular interests might develop
- Makes contact at the beginning and end of each day with the child and parent/carer and provides updates on progress and developments
- Takes part in reviews with the children
- Monitors the curriculum offered to individual children and to groups to ensure that:
  - A range of appropriate experiences is offered
  - Opportunities are provided to explore a curriculum area in detail
  - All areas of Learning and Development are covered
  - Experiences are matched to a child's abilities, needs and developmental level
  - Themes which relate to children's experience and interests are chosen

The Key Person system provides for continuity of relationship without exclusivity. It is important that a baby is supported to form relationships to other carers too so that they are not too upset if their Key Person needs to be away for some reason but each baby should be looked after by as few adults as possible.

The Key Person needs to be sensitive and responsive to a baby's needs in the same way that the baby's parent is.

For older children Key Persons do not remain with their children all day and children are encouraged to develop relationships with other staff members at the Centre

The Key Person's role is supported by and supports the work of the whole staff team.

## Communication Plan

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All parents are to be informed of the policy and procedures regarding the Key Person on registration. Staff members will check with parents that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.



# Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

## Review Date

Date: .....

Person responsible: .....

## Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

- Parental/Guardian Involvement Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Guidance & Discipline Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Transitions Policy

## References/Supporting documents/Related Legislation

- Siolta** – The National Framework for Quality in Early Childhood Education Supporting Quality Barnardos...
- Elfer, P., Goldschmied, E. and Selleck, D. (2002) **Key Persons in Nurseries, Building Relationships for Quality Provision** London: National Early Years Network
- Elfer, P. (2002) **Attachment and the Key Person Role in Birth to Three Matters: A Framework to Support Children in their Earliest Years** DCSF Publications Centre

## Contact Information [Who to contact for more information]

Name: .....

## Policy Created

Date: .....

## Signatures

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