

## Settling-in Policy

A settling-in period is intended to bridge the gap between home and nursery for babies and children. It will help children become accustomed to the nursery setting and allow them time to form an attachment to their key person. Starting nursery can be enormously beneficial for babies, children and their families, yet it can be an anxious time too. If children are to play and learn successfully, they must feel secure and happy in the absence of their carers. They need to be confident in the knowledge that their carers will return at the end of the session.

In order to achieve these aims our policy is to:

- assign each baby/child a key person to help settle them into The Ark
- ask parents/carers to visit
- agree with parents/carers how we will introduce and settle a child into the group
- ensure that the individual needs of the child and family are met
- introduce children new to the group in small numbers over a period of time
- give each child adequate time and support needed to settle
- encourage parents to bring babies/children's comforters, for example, dummies, teddies, blankets
- encourage parents/carers where possible to separate from their children for brief periods at first then gradually build up to longer absences. Parents/carers will remain on site during settling sessions so that they are close and able to return quickly if their baby/child is distressed
- reassure parents/carers who are anxious about their child by giving them information about their child's activities and welfare during the session
- recall a parent/carer if the child is distressed or unable to settle
- if necessary encourage term time only children to attend during the holidays for consistency