

Settling in Policy

Malvern Special Families is committed to ensuring that all families are made to feel welcome and that children feel safe and secure at our clubs, in the absence of their parents /carers. We aim to support parents and carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by considering the individual needs and circumstances of every child and their families. Our aim is for children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the club and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We want parents to have confidence in children's continued wellbeing and not to worry whilst their child is with us. Each new child is invited to a settling in session accompanied by their parent/carer before they attend on their own. This visit is important in identifying the child's individual needs, how we can best meet these, and the appropriate staffing ratio required.

New families provide information on their child in their registration form but invaluable information can also be gathered face-to-face in order to benefit from parents' insights. The range of information gathered at a settling in session needs to include sufficient detail for the play staff to understand the child's stage of learning and development, their likes, dislikes, who and what is important to them, their routines, how the child communicates and those all -important tips and tricks.

The setting may ask parent/carers to share information from other professionals and may want to seek parents' permission to work with other professionals where necessary.

The playleader will provide parent/carers with relevant information about the club policies and procedures, with particular importance given to the safeguarding policy.

- Settling in sessions are usually around half an hour long.
- The family are provided with photos of the playleader and deputy in advance of the club, so they have a familiar face to greet them.
- The playleader will meet each new child and welcomes them and their parent/carer, to the club. Each child is greeted at their own level in a friendly and welcoming manner. Verbal communication is kept simple and the playleader can use signalong and a visual timetable to aid communication.
- The new family are introduced to the other children and staff, in person, and made to feel comfortable, safe and at home. Staff are called by their first names to create a friendly atmosphere.
- Extra effort will be made to link the child with other children they know locally or from school. The child will then be encouraged to get to know the other children and settle in the group.
- Each child is given a keyworker for each club. The keyworker will read their registration information and ensure they know what is required to meet the child's needs.
- The rules and boundaries are set out for everybody each time a new child arrives so that they are not singled out for the information. This reminds the current group of children of the rules in a friendly way.
- Some children may show distress in the new club environment and every effort is made to reassure them and engage them to take part in a favourite activity.
- Each child's individual needs are catered for whilst ensuring that we meet the needs of the group of children as a whole.
- A good line of communication is held between staff and parent/carers to monitor the progress of their child.
- There is a journal in place for each child to record their journey at the clubs. This can be a physical book or on our Tapestry account. These will be updated with evidence of reaching their developmental goals, as well of photos of their experiences and engagement in the activities.

Journals are shared with parent/carers, and they are encouraged to look through these with their child at the end of club sessions.

- Staff will always be available to discuss any concerns or other issues with parents/carers regarding their child and their participation at the club. If parent/carers wish to speak to the Service Manager or CEO, they should make an appointment to come in for a chat.
- Everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Each child is encouraged to reach their full potential.
- If more than one settling in session is needed than this can be supported.
- On occasion one of our clubs may not suit a new child and we will support them in accessing one of our other club settings that may better meet their needs.