



Skippers Hill Foundation Stage: Settling in Policy

At Skippers Hill we recognise that starting in Kindergarten may be the first time a child has spent time away from their parents or main carer, and we are mindful that 'parents are children's first and most enduring educators' (Early Years Foundation Stage – Positive Relationships/Parents as Partners).

Starting in a new setting is a major event in a child's life and this time of transition can be stressful for both children and parents. At Skippers we seek to ensure a smooth transition by working in close partnership with parents, so that families feel supported as they become familiar with the staff and the routines of the Early Years department.

We believe that it is important for the Kindergarten staff to take time to get to know the children and their families. We recognise that 'children approach school with a diversity of individual experiences, attitudes, expectations and developmental differences'. (Children Starting School: A Guide to Successful transition and transfers for teachers and assistants - Hilary Fabian, chapter 1 page 1) and take account of this in our initial and ongoing planning.

At Skippers Hill Manor we aim to:

- Help the children to feel happy and secure in the school environment in the absence of their parents.
- Help the children feel confident to explore and experiment in the physical environment.
- Help the children to develop independence in the new environment and freely access all the resources.
- Support the children to develop positive relationships with both adults and other children in the setting.
- Help children to communicate their needs to others in an appropriate way.
- Promote and model appropriate behaviour, with clear expectations and positive reinforcements.
- Work in partnership with parents in their children's learning.
- Support and build upon the children's prior experiences and knowledge gained in their home environment.
- Encourage and welcome open and honest communication between staff and parents.

In line with our recognition that every child is different, and that settling in can be a longer process for younger children, we aim to be flexible in our approach and structure the transition process to suit each particular child.

However, there are guidelines which will apply to every child.

- During the initial few weeks, the parent or carer will discuss and plan sessions with the child's key person.
- Parents or carers should be prepared to spend time with their child in the Kindergarten during the first week and possibly longer.
- Sessions will be short at first, gradually increasing in length as the child settles and forms a bond with their key person.
- We will draw up a 'settling in plan' for each new child in consultation with the parents. This will be a guide and may be subject to change.

We ask that parents or carers ensure we have a contact number at all times, and we are happy to call and reassure parents during a session.

All parents will be offered an initial consultation during the first term of attendance. However, we encourage open and frequent dialogue between parents and staff - one of us is usually available for short chats at drop off time, and longer appointments can usually be made for the same day.

Reviewed July 2023: Loraine Pincott

Date of next policy review - July 2024