09 Early years practice procedures

**09.3 Prime times – The role of the key person**

*‘Each child must be assigned a key person’* (EYFS 2023)

All young children need to form a secure attachment to all staff but sometimes having a key person can work well when they join the setting to feel safe, happy, and eager to participate and learn.

**The key person role**

* A key person builds an on-going relationship with the child and his/her parents and is committed to that child’s well-being while in the setting.
* Every child that attends is allocated a key person before they begin settling in - it is not the responsibility of the child to choose their own key person.

All staff get to know each child so that they can fulfil the role in the absence of the main key person, for example, during annual leave or sickness.

* A member of staff conducts the progress check at age two for the children.
* The role is fully explained to parents on induction and the name of the child’s key person.
* All staff are central to settling a child into the setting. The setting manager and key person explain the need for a settling in process and agree a plan with the parents.
* The number of children for each key person takes into account the individual needs of children and the capacity of the key person to manage their cohort; it is also influenced by part-time places and part time staff
* Photographs of key persons and their key groups are displayed clearly.

**Parents**

* All staff support parents in their role as the child’s first and most enduring educators.
* All staff is responsible for the child’s developmental records, completing the progress check at age two, and for sharing information about progress with the child’s parents.

**Learning and development**

* The key person helps to ensure that every child’s learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment of children, using information gathered about their achievements, interests and learning styles to plan for each individual child’s learning and development.
* If a child’s progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with the setting manager or SENCO and the child’s parents.

**All staff know all the children as we are a small setting**

* The role of all staff is to step in when the main key person is absent or unavailable to provide a stable and consistent care relationship for the child.
* All staff members are identified when the child starts .

**Safeguarding children**

* All staff have a responsibility towards their all children to report any concern about their development, welfare or child protection matter to the setting manager and to follow the procedures in this respect.
* Regular supervision with the setting manager provides further opportunities to discuss the progress and welfare of key children.

**Further guidance**

[Being a Key Person in an Early Years Setting](https://portal.eyalliance.org.uk/Shop#!prod/c425e3b2-7364-ea11-a811-000d3a0bad7c/curr/GBP) (Alliance Publication)