

## Settling in new children – Rainbow Room

At Melbourn Playgroup we believe that the settling in process is important to help children to feel secure thus enabling them to thrive whilst they are at playgroup. Different children will have different needs and previous experiences so this needs to be taken into account; therefore we believe a 'one size fits all' approach does not work. Developmentally we know that losing sight of 'their adult' can cause distress for young children, so the primary aim of the settling in process is to allow children to form a relationship and bond with their key person which enables the child to feel safer and more secure.

In order to make settling as successful as possible at Melbourn Playgroup we will learn as much as we can about the child so that we can support the child in the best way. This will be achieved by talking to parent/carers, all about me forms and home visits.

We have a framework for settling in children but each stage will vary from child to child. The child will only move onto the next stage when parents/carers along with the key person feel that the child is ready to do so. Time spent on each stage will vary from child to child depending on their needs.

Before your child starts they will have:

Stay and play	Parent/carer and child visit together and stay for 45 minutes.
Home visit	Key person will come and visit the child and parent/carers at home.

These stages commence on your child's start date:

Stage one	Child comes in with parent. If the child is ready and settled the parent leaves and returns 1 hour later. This would normally be for a minimum of two sessions.
Stage two	Child stays for a whole morning.
Stage three	Child stay for a morning and lunch
Stage four	Child stays all day

\* Stage three and four only for children who are booked to stay for full days

During stage one if children need additional support the length of time the parent leaves can be shortened and built up more gradually and/or these following steps can be used as an additional way to build up the child's attachment with their key person. Time spent on each step will be agreed on by the parent/carer and key person and will depend on the child's individual needs.

Step 1	Parent/carer and child play with key person joining in.
Step 2	Key person and child play while parent/carer takes the role of onlooker.
Step 3	Key person and child play while parent/carer in sight of child is engaged in another task e.g reading
Step 4	Key person and child play while parent/carer tells the child they have to pop out. Parent/carer leaves and immediately returns.
Step 5	Key person and child plays while parent/carer tells the child that they have to pop out and returns after 5 minutes.

Initially parent/carers will be encouraged to come into playgroup with their child and help them settle before they leave. When the child is ready, the parent/carer should say goodbye, tell their child they will be back later and then leave. Once the child is fully settled parent/carers can move to saying goodbye at the outside door and letting their child come in with a member of staff. If needed the child's key person can greet them at the door and bring the child in.

We understand that for parent/carers leaving their child at a new setting can be an anxious and worrying experience particularly if this is the first time, they have left their child. We will do our best to support parent/carers and work in partnership with them. We also know that children can be quick to pick up anxiety signals from nervous parent/carers through body language so will support parents with this if needed.