



Kenyngton Manor Nursery and Preschool Settling In & Transitions Procedure

At Kenyngton Manor Nursery & Preschool we aim to support children with settling quickly and easily by considering their individual needs and circumstances, whilst always involving parents/carers throughout the whole process. Our goal is for children to feel safe, stimulated, and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's continued wellbeing and abilities and to recognise their role as active partners, with all children being able to benefit from what we have to offer.

Settling In

All staff know about the importance of building strong attachments with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of attachment and use this knowledge to support children and families settling into the nursery & preschool. We work in partnership with parents to settle children into the environment by:

- Allocating a key person to each child. The key person welcomes and supports the child, ensuring that care is tailored to meet their individual needs- see **Key Person Procedure**. The key person offers a settled relationship for children and builds a relationship with parents/carers during the settling in period and throughout their time at the nursery or preschool. This is to ensure families have a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process.
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery & preschool.
- Encouraging parents/carers and children to visit our setting prior to a planned admission.
- Carrying out home visits to get to know children and families in a familiar and comfortable environment and to talk to parents/carers about our setting.
- Providing an 'All About Me' booklet for parents/carers to complete before children start at our nursery or preschool. This helps staff to get to know children's likes, dislikes, particular needs, important people in their life, communication ability, temperament, care needs or special objects. This is included in the welcome pack.
- 'Stay and Play Welcome Sessions' lasting one hour where children can explore the setting freely, parents can get to know arrival and drop off routines and where all staff can meet new children and their families.
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the nursery or preschool and developing a plan with them to help support their child. Every child reacts differently, do not worry if your child is unsettled for longer than others. On average, it takes around two to four weeks for children to settle.
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children, for brief periods at first, then gradually building up to longer absences.

- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are fully supported.
- Respecting the circumstances of all families and reassuring them of their child's progress towards settling in.

If your child is distressed and not settling after 45 minutes, you will be contacted to collect them, then we will devise a plan to suit the needs of your child and support them in building up to their full hours. A familiar routine is in place to ensure all children know what to do when they are dropped off at the setting.

During the settling-in period, we encourage parents/carers to say goodbye in a calm and brief manner and to tell your child when you will be back. Staff should confidently greet and say goodbye to children too. Children might like to keep a favourite toy, photo or comforter with them to begin with as a transitional object.

We understand that some parents/carers pay for their child's nursery space and if your child is unsettled then their nursery hours may be reduced. In this instance, alternative arrangements can be made, under the manager's discretion, to suit your child's needs and to avoid unnecessary costs. An appointment can be made by speaking to nursery/preschool staff, telephoning the main school number- 01932 783 778 or emailing info@kmps.thpt.org.uk.

Transitions

Transitions occur as children move within settings from one room or area to another or from one type of activity to another (for example, active play to tidy up time to eating time). They also occur as children move between settings (for example, from home to the early years setting or from the early years setting to school).

Changes can be stressful at any stage in life, but for young children they can be particularly challenging and major changes can have a lifelong impact. The time from birth until six years of age is a very significant time in a child's life. Research shows that the early years of childhood are critically important for brain development. The brain develops more rapidly during these years than at any other later period and we know that this development is significantly affected by the child's early environment and experiences. Moving on to different surroundings places demands on young children as they must learn to cope with a new situation. Parents/guardians also need support to cope with change and new situations. The sensitive care and attention given to planning and ensuring smooth transitions and settling in is extremely important. Young children learn from every experience, including routines and transitions and they can develop skills through well-managed routines and transitions.

Many young children are experiencing a wide range of transitions each day. Because of the many different experiences they have, it is especially important that there is some continuity and similarity of approach in the ways in which the important adults in their lives behave and interact, not only with the children themselves but also with the other adults who are involved with them.



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At Kenyngton Manor Nursery & Preschool we recognise children need:

- Consistent key relationships and carefully planned introductions to all new settings, routines, and experiences to help ease any anxiety associated with change that they may feel.
- Continuity and similarity of approach in the ways in which the important adults in their lives behave and interact, not only with them but also with the other adults who are involved with them.
- Individualised routines and practices to support their needs.
- The focus to be on developing their social and emotional skills, communication and language skills, positive learning dispositions like independence and curiosity, and self-help skills, and less focus placed on academic skills to support their transition to school.

We recognise parents need:

- To know that their child will have their transitions made as easy and comfortable for them as possible.
- To have their own involvement in easing transitions for their child welcomed, supported and facilitated.
- Frequent sharing of information and goals and strong connections between them and us to help ease transitions and settling in for their child.

Lastly, we recognise staff need:

- To be very clear on our setting's expectations in relation to ensuring smooth transitions and positive settling in experiences for the children.
- To be aware of the need for parents to be supported, facilitated, and involved with them in easing transitions for their children and ensuring that they settle in well.
- Frequent communication with parents about the child's communications, routines, temperament, responses, reactions, likes, dislikes, culture and ability to adapt to change.

Transitions may include the following:

- Beginning for the first time at our setting from home or another early years setting.
- Daily arriving to our setting from home and leaving for home.
- Daily changes within routines and from one type of activity to another.
- Separations from familiar people and/or changes in routine or rooms within our setting.
- Significant changes in children's home or family circumstances.
- Final moving out of our setting into another early years setting or to school.

We recognise that successful experiences during early transitions can increase a child's ability to adapt to changes in the future and can provide a more secure base for their learning and development. We work to develop strong relationships with families through frequent communication and sharing of information and goals. Strong connections between each child's home and setting help ease transitions into new or different settings, routines and/or relationships. We maintain continuity of relationships as far as possible and carefully plan all introductions to new settings, routines, and experiences for the children to help ease any anxiety associated with change. We do our best to ensure that we provide a secure base that supports the children's focused attention, curiosity about exploring their world and their emerging independence. Major transitions are not one-off events, these transitions go on over a period of time and everything that young children experience prepares them for other transitions to come. We consider it essential to enable parents/carers and our staff to jointly support and facilitate successful transitions through responsive relationships that are secure, consistent and continuous. All predictable transitions are planned with sensitivity to each child's individual needs and interests, and children are supported to develop the dispositions and skills needed to make major transitions successful. We aim to provide relationships and routines that are consistent, predictable, and responsive to support each child's sense of trust, security, and identity. We consider it essential that the staff member assigned to individual children's care (key person) can read and respond to their needs.

We always:

- Consider transitions from the perspective of the wellbeing, learning and development needs of each child.
- Assign a key person to each child ([see Key Person Procedure](#))
- Consider health and development needs of each child.
- Build partnerships with families to support the development of responsive, respectful relationships among children and staff.
- Individualise routines and practices to support each child's needs, interests, temperament, their own and their family's circumstances and their preferences, their culture and first language.
- Use routines and transitions as opportunities to promote children's learning and development.
- Plan for transitions and placements that provide consistency and continuity for children and their families.
- Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of transitions using various means, including observations of the children and feedback from their families.
- Support parents in being or becoming advocates as they transition with their children both into our setting from home or other settings (such as a childminder) and from our setting to other settings, especially school.
- Ensure the most appropriate transition to other environments and settings from participation in our setting by beginning transition planning as early as possible prior to the child's move (usually the beginning of the Summer term if children are starting school or moving from nursery to preschool)
- Liaise with other settings appropriately and provide any relevant information (via parents or with parents' consent) that is helpful in ensuring a successful transition from our setting to other settings such as a different school.



Kenyngton Manor Nursery and Preschool Settling In & Transitions Procedure

Routines and transitions within the daily programme of activities

- Children are encouraged to attend to personal routines, such as going to the toilet, according to their individual body schedules.
- Children have easy access to their transitional objects when they want or need them and are given time and understanding to help them to become more able to manage longer periods without them. Dummies are avoided however, if necessary nursery children can have them.
- While balancing the range of activities (active/quiet, small group/large group/individual, indoors/outdoors), routines and transitions are kept to a minimum and managed consistently so that children can develop trust and a sense of security.
- Transitions within the daily routine, although managed consistently, are as flexible as possible to allow for children to follow their interests where possible, we are a free-flow setting.
- Transitions that must happen, involving moving from one type of activity to another, are planned so that children who are ready before others have something to do while they wait.
- Children are given advance notice visually, for example with an interactive visual routine and/or large egg timers, of changes to routines or planned changes within the schedule of activities that will affect them.
- It is considered important to recognise that some children need to be given more time, support and assistance to cope with changes in activity levels and/or types of activities, than others.
- Children can participate in helping with routines as much as they are able (for example helping to set the table or cleaning up).

Transition to a new setting

Throughout the years before children move to a new setting or school, they are supported to develop the skills and dispositions they will need to transition and settle in well to the new setting. These skills and dispositions are developed through our quality curriculum, which is informed by the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The curriculum we offer supports children's learning and development in Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development (the prime areas).

To support children with their transition we:

- Take children who already attend Kenyngton Manor Nursery or Preschool for daily one-hour visits to their new classroom over the Summer Term. The children can meet their new teachers, get to know the environment, and familiarise themselves with routines during these visits.

- Arrange home visits for children new to Nursery & Preschool. Photo booklets of our setting are also shared during the home visit.
- Organise stay and play sessions for new children, parents/carers are asked to stay during this visit.
- Look at children's all about me booklets to plan activities based around their interests and to learn more about them.
- Welcome family photos and transitional objects such as a favourite toy, blanket, or comforter.
- Create comfortable and quiet spaces for children to go if they feel anxious or overwhelmed during their visits.
- Provide a free-flow environment allowing children to make independent choices, to move freely and to access a range of activities and resources.
- Organise meetings between professionals to hand over any relevant information to children's new teacher/s.
- Display a clear visual daily routine to support children in understanding what is happening now and next.
- Ask a familiar adult to join children in their new class or setting for a short period (where possible) to provide children with familiarity.
- Allow space for children and do not overwhelm them with too much attention or information, a gentle approach works best.
- Encourage children to make positive relationships with others and consider class arrangements where we feel children will thrive, play and learn best.
- Staggered starts are arranged for all children in the Autumn term to help children settle in and get used to their new environment.

Considering culture in transition practices

Providing culturally competent care and education supports a developing child's sense of security, identity, competence, confidence, and connectedness. When staff members understand and honour family childrearing practices and preferences, they can provide children with consistency and familiarity, which are especially important during transitions. It is, of course, always important to ensure that all practices are legal and are in the child's best interests.

As far as possible we will:

- Provide harmony with each child's home culture, for example: ensure that we use some of the child's home language if it is not English and encourage parents to continue to use the child's first language at home.
- Provide a culturally relevant environment that is familiar and homelike to the child where items familiar to the child are included.
- Understand and respect each family's cultural beliefs and childrearing values (as long as these are in the child's best interests).
- Provide consistency by understanding the home routines of each child.
- Discuss each family's expectations for their child's learning and development and the transition.
- Be aware of our own cultural values, beliefs, and expectations. Acknowledge how these match or differ from the family's expectations and consider differences or potential conflicts.



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We encourage families to foster cultural consistency and continuity during transitions by:

- Sharing their cultural values and childrearing practices with staff (ideally their child's key person) before and during their child's transition and saying what they expect from the staff
- Communicating frequently with parents/carers about their child's routines, temperament, reactions, likes, dislikes, and ability to adapt to differences and change.
- Providing staff with ongoing feedback and discussing/negotiating differences.

Guidance on saying good-bye and moving on

Relationships are very important to children. Although children may not always express or understand their feelings, these feelings do exist and are sometimes expressed in ways that make it difficult for parents and other adults to deal with them. The following suggestions can help children accept changes and deal with them in appropriate ways.

- Prepare the child by giving them some notice when a relationship is about to change. (For example, tell them, "Sam is going to be moving soon, and he won't be able to come and play every day but you will make new friends").
- Help the child understand their feelings by using words like lonely, worried, sad or unhappy to describe how they might be feeling if they are showing signs of such feelings.
- Put things in perspective (For example, "We won't see Ava as much now but you will still have Sophie and Joe to play with").
- Help the child express the meaning of the relationship by encouraging them to make a card, draw a picture or make a small gift. Let them know that relationships are very important by creating an opportunity to express affection and validate their feelings.
- Focus on the positives associated with change. When people grow and move forward, there will always be changes in relationships. New teachers, new friends, and changes in activities are part of life.
- Share with the child some of your own experiences in leaving valued relationships. Tell them how you felt at that time.
- Create a memento. Children are concrete thinkers and having a physical reminder reassures them that the relationship was shared and is an important part of their lives.