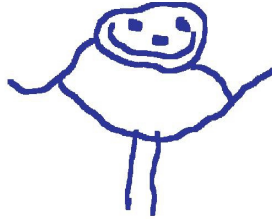


St.Thomas' Nursery

Key Person A Good Practice Guide

St.Thomas' Nursery



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'If you think you can, you can'

The role of the key person

Children thrive from a base of loving and secure relationships, normally provided by a child's parents, but it can also be provided by a key person.

A key person is a named member of staff with responsibilities for specific children who helps those children feel safe and cared for. The role is an important one and an approach set out in the EYFS Framework. It involves the key person responding sensitively to children's feelings and behaviours and meeting emotional needs by giving reassurance, and supporting the child's well-being.

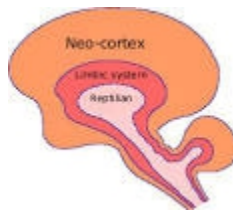
The key person supports physical needs too, helping with issues like nappy changing, toileting and dressing. This person is a familiar figure who is accessible and available as a point of contact for parents and one who builds relationships with the child and parents or carers.

Records of development and care are created and shared by the key person, parents and the child. When secure attachments are made children feel settled and happy and are more confident to explore and as a result become more capable learners.

Nurture At Nursery!

Children's emotional needs **must** be catered for to promote high levels of well-being. They will relax and become engaged and highly involved in play through exploring, investigating and being creative. Nursery think very carefully about how children learn, when they plan for an enabling environment.

Brain research has helped us to really appreciate how important it is for us to ensure a child understands that their basic needs are going to be met. The reptilian brain is the most primitive part, responsible for basic body functions such as hunger and warmth. If we nurture and reassure children at nursery providing their own peg and drawer, free access to food and drink, comfort and a reassuring key person, we can really support a child's fundamental needs and then build on this to promote further learning and development.. This relaxed state allows the messages that the brain receive, travel deep into the top section of the brain where thinking and learning take place. This won't happen if a child is stressed or anxious, so we do all we can to alleviate this within the nursery environment.



The Importance of Attachment

Attachments are the emotional bonds that young children develop with parents and other carers such as their key person. Children with strong early attachments often separate more happily. They tend to engage in more independent play and sustain attention for longer. They are confident with both adults and other children because they feel secure and supported in their environment, knowing they have a reliable support network in place. .

They develop a secure sense of who they are as an individual their place in their immediate environment and in their family unit. Children need to be safe in the relationship they have with parents or carers. As this will provide them with the reassurance they need to ensure their physical and psychological well-being is protected by an adult. Being emotionally attached to such an adult helps the child feel secure that the person they depend on is there for them.

When children feel safe they are more inclined to try things out and be more independent. They are confident to express their ideas and feelings and feel good about themselves. Attachment influences a child's immediate all-round development and future relationships. Which is why the role of the key person is so important at nursery.

How you can help Promote the key person approach at home

Talk about your child's key person by name (not the word teacher) at home

Greet your key person with your child at the beginning of the session, to encourage a healthy handover.

Help your child with nursery routines at the beginning of each session so they become comfortable and confident with carrying them out independently.

Embrace the idea of a home visit when your key person instigates it (this really helps home/ nursery relationships).

“A rich and varied environment, supported by a sensitive adult, really promotes children's' learning and development. It gives them confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging indoor and outdoor spaces”

**Every Child
Matters**

5 Outcomes for children

Be Healthy

Stay Safe

Enjoy and Achieve

Make a positive contribution

Achieve Economic well being

