Key Person & Transition Policy

1. Introduction

At Home from Home, we understand how important the relationship is between the children in our care and the adults that look after them. Every child needs that one special adult in the setting that understands their needs. The relationship between the young child and their parent/guardian is the most important, however when the parent/guardian is not present there must be another key adult that the child can rely on for care, love, attention and learning.

This should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Professional Love Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Management & positive behaviour policy
- Settling in policy
- Transition policy
- Special educational needs and disability policy
- Babysitting policy
- Curriculum Policy

2. Contents

The following sections are included in this policy document:

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3. What is a key person?

Here at Home from Home supporting your child's needs and providing a caring environment is vital in our everyday practice and ethos. We follow the guidelines of implementing the Key Person (KP) approach as stated in the Development Matters: Early Years framework.

'The Key person provides love, care and a nurturing environment that promotes positive attachments for their new key child.'
The Key person is not considered a substitute for a parent but provides a solid foundation where a child feels safe and secure, knowing anxieties children may face when separated from their parents. As a child moves through the three age cohorts at Home from Home, they will usually transition to a new key person. This is a crucial part of the transition process helping to prepare for these stages through school life.

The expectations regarding the Key Person are met with full commitment and are not taken lightly. Any concerns you may have over your child's chosen Key Person then we advise speaking to the room manager or room leader if you do not feel comfortable raising those concerns in person.

4. Process when a child starts at Home from Home

Every child will be paired with a key person that will be responsible for the child's individual well-being and education. Each child will also have a second key person. This is known as the buddy system. This means that the child will always have an adult that is familiar to them while in the setting. The "buddy" will be available for the child when the key person is on annual leave, attending training sessions or unwell.

Parents will meet with the key person during the first settling in session. During the meeting information will be shared, this will allow the key person to gain knowledge about the child and their parents. It will also help the parent to gain information about how the key person will support their child during the settling in period and about the daily routines for the children.

The key carer will be responsible for planning activities and experiences for the child to enable them to feel secure and happy in the setting. She/he will work in partnership with parents to support the child in building up a trusting relationship with the key person and buddy.

The key person will support the child during risky activities to gain understanding of the child's developmental levels and understanding.

The key person will be the first point of contact for the child's parents and extended family and wherever possible will be present for drop off & pick up. However, the team leader and manager will be accessible to speak with parents too. We operate an open-door policy.

The key person will always respect the parent's wishes and address any concerns they may have. Parents are valued as the first educators for their child. Key persons will offer support to parents and children in order to get the best outcomes for all concerned. They will help the parents to access outside agencies where necessary such as specialist support personnel or health visitors.

The key person will engage with parents to offer support at home as well as in the setting. This could involve working together to improve sleeping patterns, food concerns or behavioural issues amongst others.

Key persons will support the child through changes both at the setting and at home. Building trusting relationships with parents, will allow key person's to support children in order to get the best outcomes. We understand that a house move, a new baby arriving, a close bereavement, parent's separating, a parent working away from home and even something as simple as a child's bedroom being re-decorated can impact on a child's emotional wellbeing. At these times, key person's behaviour will remain consistent towards the child throughout. They will plan activities and experiences that will allow the child to express their feelings and anxieties during any transition period.

Whilst the key person is so important to ensure the parent and child have a key point of contact, all other practitioners at Home from Home play a huge role in caring and supporting children in their development. Over time all practitioners get to know the children as individuals and will support them in their daily care and wellbeing and will liaise with the key person.

5. Transitioning to the next age cohort

Key persons will implement and support positive transitions for the children. When a child is planned to transition to the next age cohort, the parents have the opportunity to view the room and to be introduced to the room leader and her/his team. A transition meeting will be held via Zoom for parents to attend which will give them lots of information about the next age cohort and what to expect, they also receive a PowerPoint with photos of the employees within that room.

The existing key person will produce a transition form that will include any dietary requirements and/or allergies that the child may have. The form will also advise of the child's current development stage and needs. The parents will read and sign the form before it is passed onto the new key person.

The settle sessions are planned for the month before they are due to transition to a new age cohort, they last over a four-week period as follows:

- The first settle is one hour long usually 9.30 or 2.30 – the existing key person will come to the new age cohort with the child and introduce them to their new key person and they will spend time getting to know the child and ask the existing key person questions about their likes and dislikes, development need etc.
- The second settle is one hour long – the existing key person will take the child to the new age cohort and meet their new key person, then the existing key person will engage elsewhere and leave the child with their new key person. However, if the child is upset, they will not be left distressed for long periods and if necessary, the existing key person will return to support them

- The third settle and fourth settle is either a drop off (8.00-11.30) session or a pick up (2.30-6.00) session. This is so the child can experience a full morning or afternoon and how a drop off/ pick up works in the new cohort.
- If a child is struggling to settle, we will plan in more settles, based on the child's individual needs.

6. Transitioning to another setting

If a child transitions to a new setting, the key person will produce a transition form to send to the new setting, which will include any dietary requirements and/or allergies that the child may have. The form will also advise of the child's current development stage and needs. The parents will read and sign the form before it is passed onto the new setting.

7. Transitioning from another setting

Home from Home will liaise with the other setting and ask them to complete a transition form as per section 6.

8. Transitioning to school

When the time comes for a child to transition to school, the Pre-school manager will hold a transition meeting in person and via Zoom to let parents know what the school readiness programme looks like at Home from Home to make this as smooth transition as possible.

Once school places have been released, we work closely with the parents and collate a list of which schools the children will be attending. We aim to plan group times for children going to the same schools so they can start to build friendships so they have familiar faces when they start school. Home from Home supports transitions to between 10-16 local primary schools and this is a well-established process.

The Pre school manager will attend transition meetings at the schools and discuss what they would like us to focus on to ensure the children are 'school ready', some of the teachers may also attend the nursery to meet the children too.

The key workers will produce a transition form that will include information about the child's current developmental stage and needs. The parents will read and sign this form before it is passed onto the school.

Home from Home follows a 'school readiness programme' during June to August, this helps the children prepare for school and includes the following:

- Pencil control
- School Uniform familiarisation
- Dressing/Undressing
- Good Hygiene

- Key groups with children attending the same school

Home from Home traditionally has good feedback from West Sussex County Council and local schools as to how well children from Home from Home settle.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and also in line with any changes in statutory guidance.

10. Version Control

Version	Date	Status	Comments	By
1	February 2014	Issued		Nicola Law
2	October 2015	Updated		Emma CM
3	October 2018	Reviewed		Polly Manners
4	April 2021	Reviewed		Alex Algieri
5	January 2022	Reviewed		Cassie Jones
6	October 2023	Reviewed	Added version control	Sophie Eade
7	February 2025		Rewritten	Sophie Eade
8	May 2026	Reviewed		Sophie Eade

Appendix 1 – Internal Transition Form

The Child

Child's full name:	DOB:	TR Key Worker:	Current TR attendance: M/T/W/Th/Fr
Alternative name:	Time in TR:	PS Key Worker:	Planned PS attendance M/T/W/Th/Fr

Health, Habits, Playing and Learning

Eating Habits:	Special interests:	Sleeping habits:	Favourite playmates:
			Comforter/toys:
Allergies:	Phobias & fears:		

Parental Details

Parents' Names: 1. 2.	Plans for settling periods:
Sibling information:	

Transition Arrangements

New key person introduced to parents?	Transition meeting held with parents?	Additional comments:

Parents Comments:	Parents signature:
	Key Workers signature:
	Line Managers signature:

Appendix 2 – New setting transition form

Child Transition Summary

On completion the key person at Home from Home should arrange a call with the key person at the new setting to discuss the details within the transition document

Full Name:	Photo of Child
Date of Birth:	
Current Setting: Home from Home	
Key Person:	
Date and Age Started at Current Setting:	Other Settings Attended:
New Setting:	Contact details of new setting:
Number of Hours Attending Current Setting:	Home Language:

Sessions (Please highlight)					**Attendance** (Please highlight)	Additional information:
M	**T**	**W**	**Th**	**F**	Excellent	
AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	Good	

PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	Below Expectations	

General Information (Health, dietary requirements, allergies)	
Dietary requirements/ Allergies: N/A	Medical Concerns: N/A
Eating Habits:	Comforters: N/A
Toileting: Nappies	Sleeping Arrangements:
Special Interests:	Dislikes:

Safeguarding Information:			
Looked After Child:	Yes | No	Child Protection Plan:	Yes | No
Child in Need Plan:	Yes | No		Yes | No

Contact details:

Special Educational Needs: Yes | No

Area of Need (Please Hightlight)		**Other Professionals Involved** (Please Highlight)	
Communication and Language Cognitive and Learning Social, Emotional and Mental Health Sensory Physical		Health Visitor Physiotherapist Speech and Language Therapist Occupational Therapist Other (Please specify) – Child Development Centre	
Referral:	Yes | No	Date Referral was made:	2023

Characteristics of effective learning: Brief summary of how the child is doing linked with the characteristics of effective learning:

Early Years Foundation Stage: Brief Summary of development within the areas of learning:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Communication, Language and Literacy	Physical development

Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding of the World	Expressive Arts and Design
		.	

Current Keyperson signature:	
Parents signature:	

New Keyperson signature:	