

Key points to help Settling in

Little and often—start off with a short induction and follow this with longer periods at the nursery as the child becomes more familiar with the environment, staff and other children

Communication- talk to the staff and tell them everything they need to know what comforts your child, position they sleep in, routines. Also tell staff if you have any concerns

Discuss at home with your child—talk positively to your child about nursery and how they will meet new friends and do new activities

Saying Goodbye—Always say goodbye to your child so they know you are leaving and staff can reassure them you are coming back

Arrangements- Plan to settle in your child around their routine. **It is not a good idea to come when they are due a two hour sleep!!!**

Be Patient—For many children this might be the first time leaving parents, the process may take longer than expected. Each child is unique and will settle in their own time

Before you know it you and your child will feel right at home in Sandcastles



If you wish to discuss any of these points further please do not hesitate to talk to any member of staff



A guide to settling in to Sandcastles



Tips and advice on how to make leaving your child in our care easier

Leaving your child for the first time can be a very daunting experience for a parent. At Sandcastles we realise that the transition into nursery life can be difficult for both the child and the parent and we offer a settling in period to bridge the gap between home and Sandcastles. This will make starting nursery a positive and pleasurable experience for all involved.

This settling in period is designed to allow both the parent and the child to become accustomed to nursery and form a bond with the staff within their rooms.

If the children are carefully prepared they can settle in without much of ado. So what preparation needs to take place?

A good starting point is to understand that young children are actually primed to stay close to their parents. From the age of around eight months onwards to three years and older, children react when their parents leave by crying and protesting. In evolutionary terms, it made perfect sense for youngsters to remain near their parents to avoid danger.

Settling in

In order to prevent your child from becoming distressed when they first leave you, the staff will work with you to settle your child in. It is a

good idea that you and your child visit and attend a few short sessions.

Visiting a couple of times before actually leaving your child is essential. It allows your child to become familiar with new surroundings and get to know the staff. To help you child settle in, the nursery has specific carers in the different rooms to ensure a familiar person for special attention in the early days.

Helping your child

There are several ways in which you can help your child to settle in smoothly. First, it is important during visits to the setting that you are ready to take a step backwards and allow the staff to build a relationship with your child. Constantly playing alongside your child may mislead them into believing that in this new place, you will always be there to play. Instead, your child needs to learn that this new place is one where she enjoys playing with other children and being with the staff. While it is important that you are there during the initial visits, aim bit by bit to physically distance yourself from your child by, wandering to the edge of the room and picking up a book or talking to another person.

Taking the cue

Children are programmed to pick up on our reactions. If children notice that we smile and are relaxed in the company of the staff, they will take this as a cue that it is fine to stay. They will also notice and react if we appear anxious, and may respond by becoming fearful and clingy. While most parents are naturally a little anxious about how their children will get on, try hard to remain calm and positive, as this will rub off on your child.

Going at different speeds

Most parents wonder how quickly they can leave their children. It depends on the individual child. Children who are used to being left with relatives and friends may be quicker to settle, as they are used to being in the company of other adults.

Remember that this is not a race, however. The child that settles in gradually will have learned a valuable lesson that will stand him in good stead when he starts school. It can be useful once you start leaving your child to build up the amount of time slowly. You might start by telling the child during an early visit that you want to go to another room for a couple of minutes and then return. If your child copes with that, then you can keep increasing the time.

Sneaking off

Finally, a word about sneaking off! This might seem a good idea, especially if your child is happily playing, but in the longer term it can cause quite a few problems. When children stop playing and notice that their parent is no longer there, they can react by becoming increasingly clingy. It also means that in future situations, instead of settling down to play, children keep a watchful eye on their **parents. Aim instead to build a 'goodbye' routine** so that your child knows that you are going, but is confident that you always come back.