St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School

Key person policy

September 2026

Review: September 2027

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in September 2026

It is due for review in September 2027

Hayley Francis Date: September 2026



Head Teacher

Lindsay Wise Date: September 202



Chair of Governors

What is a Key Person?

A key person is a named member of staff who is assigned to an individual child to support their development, wellbeing and learning, and to act as a key point of contact for the child's parents or carers.
The key person is a named practitioner who takes responsibility for developing a close, consistent and responsive relationship with the child and their family. They have responsibility for a small group of children and work closely with their families.
Children may also develop strong and positive relationships with other familiar practitioners. These relationships will be valued and supported to ensure that children experience continuity of care and remain secure and confident within the nursery environment.
The key person system supports children to develop secure, positive relationships with familiar adults and helps to build strong partnerships between children, parents, carers and nursery staff.

Aims of the Key Person System

The key person system aims to:

- Provide every child with a consistent and responsive relationship with a familiar practitioner.
- Support children's emotional security, wellbeing, learning and development.
- Help children to settle into the nursery and develop confidence in their surroundings.
- Ensure that children's individual needs, interests, routines, preferences and experiences are understood and responded to.
- Develop strong, respectful partnerships between children, parents, carers and nursery staff.
- Provide continuity and consistency of care, particularly during periods of change or transition.
- Support children to develop independence, confidence and positive relationships with others.

Meeting the Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Every child will be allocated a key person who will support them to:

- Become familiar and comfortable with their surroundings.
- Feel safe, secure and confident within the nursery environment.
- Develop a genuine and trusting relationship with a familiar practitioner.
- Develop positive relationships with their parents, carers and other significant adults.
- Have their individual needs, interests, feelings and preferences recognised and responded to.
- Develop confidence, independence and positive relationships with other children and adults.

The key person will respond sensitively to each child's feelings, behaviour, communication and ideas, helping them to develop confidence, emotional security and independence.
If a child does not develop a positive relationship with their allocated key person, consideration will be given to changing the key person to another practitioner with whom the child has developed a stronger and more secure relationship.
A child's individual attendance pattern will be considered when allocating a key person to ensure that, wherever possible, the child has regular opportunities to develop a consistent relationship with their named practitioner.
The nursery will clearly identify each child's key person by displaying their name and photograph within the appropriate room.

Allocation of Key Persons

When allocating a key person, the nursery will consider the individual needs and circumstances of each child and family.
Wherever reasonably possible, consideration will be given to:

- The child's attendance pattern and days of attendance.
- Existing relationships between the child and members of staff.
- The child's age, stage of development and individual needs.
- Any identified SEND, medical, communication or emotional needs.
- The child's home language, cultural background and family circumstances.
- Staffing arrangements and the need to maintain continuity of care.
- Any information shared by parents or carers during the registration and settling-in process.

The nursery will aim to ensure that children have regular opportunities to spend meaningful time with their key person.

Deputy or Backup Key Person

Each child will also have access to a familiar practitioner who can provide continuity of care when the key person is absent.
The deputy or backup key person will be familiar with the child's:

Individual needs and routines.
Interests and preferences.
Learning and development.
Emotional wellbeing.
Communication style.
Relevant information shared by parents or carers.
The nursery will ensure that appropriate information is shared between the key person and other familiar practitioners so that children continue to receive consistent care and support.
Where a key person is absent for an extended period, the nursery will consider whether a temporary or permanent change of key person is appropriate and will communicate this with the child's parents or carers.

Settling-In and Developing Relationships

The key person will play an important role in supporting children and families during the settling-in process.
The nursery will work with parents and carers to gather information about the child's routines, interests, communication, comforters, relationships, likes and dislikes, and any other information that may help the child to feel safe and secure.
Where possible, the key person will be introduced to the child and family before or during the settling-in process.
The key person will provide reassurance, respond sensitively to the child's individual needs and work at a pace appropriate to the child.
The nursery recognises that children settle in different ways and that some children may require additional time, support and reassurance before they become confident within the nursery environment.
Parents and carers will be kept informed about their child's settling-in experience and encouraged to share information that may help practitioners understand and support their child.

Responsibilities of the Key Person

The key person will:

- Actively build positive, respectful and trusting relationships with children and their families.
- Maintain clear and consistent communication with parents and carers.
- Observe children and use their observations to plan experiences that reflect their individual interests, strengths, development and needs.
- Ensure that children's physical and emotional needs are met sensitively and respectfully.
- Support children's communication and recognise their individual ways of communicating, including learning key words from a child's home language and responding appropriately to their sounds, gestures and non-verbal communication.
- Support children's emotional wellbeing and help them to feel safe and secure within the nursery.
- Share the child's learning journey regularly with parents and carers and value their written and verbal contributions through our online learning platform, **'Evidence Me'.**
- Encourage children's independence and confidence by providing appropriate support while allowing them opportunities to make choices and develop their skills.
- Support children and their families during periods of transition, including starting nursery, moving rooms, changing settings and preparing for school.
- Provide additional support and reassurance during significant milestone periods or times of change.
- Ensure that relevant information, observations, records and documentation are shared appropriately when a child moves to a new key person, room, setting or school.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure continuity of care, learning and development.
- Ensure that relevant concerns or information relating to a child's welfare are reported and recorded in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries when working with children and families.
- Respect the confidentiality of children and families and follow the nursery's confidentiality, data protection and information-sharing procedures.

Responsibilities of the Nursery

The Nursery will:

- Ensure that every child has an allocated key person.
- Ensure that, wherever reasonably possible, a child's key person is available to provide reassurance and support during new situations, periods of anxiety, illness or significant change.

- Ensure that children have opportunities to develop relationships with other familiar practitioners so that they remain supported if their key person is absent.
- Provide a suitable deputy or backup key person arrangement for every child.
- Provide regular support and supervision for key persons through supervision meetings, staff meetings and reflective practice.
- Provide opportunities for staff to discuss and reflect on the individual needs, development, wellbeing and circumstances of the children and families in their care.
- Maintain open and respectful communication with parents and carers.
- Provide regular opportunities throughout the year for families to discuss their child's development, progress and wellbeing with their key person, including scheduled parents' evenings.
- Support effective communication and information sharing when a child transitions to a new key person, room, setting or school.
- Ensure that the key person system remains responsive to children's individual needs and relationships.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the key person system and take appropriate action where improvements or changes are required.
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, confidentiality, professional boundaries and information sharing.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

The nursery recognises that parents and carers are children's first and most important educators. The key person will work in partnership with families to develop a shared understanding of the child's needs, interests, routines, development and experiences.
Parents and carers are encouraged to share information, observations, achievements and significant events from home. This information will be valued and used to support the child's learning, development and wellbeing within the nursery.
The nursery recognises that parents and carers have valuable knowledge about their child. Their views, concerns and contributions will be listened to and considered respectfully.
Parents and carers will be encouraged to communicate regularly with their child's key person and to use opportunities provided by the nursery to discuss their child's progress, development and wellbeing.
Through effective communication and partnership working, the key person system aims to provide children with continuity, consistency and a strong sense of security.

Inclusion and Individual Needs

The key person system will be inclusive and responsive to the individual needs of every child.
The nursery will consider the needs of children with SEND, disabilities, medical needs, additional emotional or behavioural needs, children learning English as an additional language and children from different cultural, linguistic and family backgrounds.
The key person will work with parents, carers and other relevant professionals where appropriate to develop a shared understanding of the child's needs and to support their participation, learning, development and wellbeing.
Where additional support is required, the key person will work in accordance with the nursery's SEND, inclusion, behaviour, health and safeguarding procedures.
The nursery will recognise and respect each child's individual identity, culture, family circumstances, communication style and experiences.

Safeguarding and Professional Boundaries

The key person relationship is based on trust, warmth, respect and responsive care. However, all staff are expected to always maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and families.
The key person system does not replace the nursery's safeguarding procedures. Any concerns about a child's welfare, safety or development must be reported, recorded and managed in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
Staff must not promise confidentiality to children or families where information needs to be shared to safeguard a child or another person.
All information relating to children and families will be handled appropriately and in accordance with the nursery's confidentiality, data protection and information-sharing procedures.

Transitions and Changes of Key Person

The nursery recognises that transitions can be significant for young children and their families.
The key person will provide support during transitions, including:

- Starting nursery.
- Moving between rooms.
- Changes to a child's attendance pattern.
- Changes in family circumstances.
- A change of key person.
- Moving to another setting.

- Preparing for school.

Where a child moves to a new key person or room, relevant information about the child's development, interests, routines, relationships, communication and individual needs will be shared appropriately.
Children will be supported to develop relationships with their new key person before the transition wherever reasonably possible.
Where a change of key person is necessary, the nursery will aim to make the transition as positive and consistent as possible and will communicate appropriately with parents and carers.

Absence of the Key Person

The nursery recognises that key persons will occasionally be absent due to annual leave, illness, training or other circumstances.
Where the key person is absent, the child's deputy or another familiar practitioner will provide continuity of care and support.
The nursery will ensure that relevant information is accessible to appropriate staff so that the child's individual routines, needs, interests and wellbeing continue to be supported.
Where the absence is prolonged, the nursery will review the arrangement and consider whether a temporary or permanent change of key person is appropriate.
Parents and carers will be informed of significant changes to their child's key-person arrangements.

Concerns About the Key Person Arrangement

The nursery recognises that a child may not always develop a positive or secure relationship with their allocated key person.
If concerns arise, the nursery will consider the child's individual needs and relationships with other practitioners. Where appropriate, the key person may be changed to another practitioner with whom the child has developed a stronger and more secure relationship.
Parents and carers are encouraged to raise any concerns about the key-person arrangement with the nursery manager or appropriate member of the leadership team.
All concerns will be listened to and considered sensitively, with the child's wellbeing and best interests remaining the priority.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The nursery management team will monitor the effectiveness of the key person system to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of children and families.
This will include considering:

- Whether every child has an allocated key person and appropriate backup arrangements.
- Whether children are developing secure and positive relationships with familiar practitioners.
- Whether key persons understand and fulfil their responsibilities.
- The quality and consistency of communication with parents and carers.
- Whether children's individual needs, interests and development are being recognised and supported.
- Whether transitions and changes of key person are being managed effectively.
- Feedback from children, parents, carers and staff.
- Any areas identified through supervision, staff meetings, reflective practice or quality assurance processes.

Where concerns or areas for improvement are identified, the nursery will take appropriate action to strengthen the key person system.

Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains effective, reflects current practice and supports the needs of children, families and staff.
The policy will also be reviewed when there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or nursery practice.
Relevant staff will be made aware of any changes to the policy and will be supported to implement them effectively.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's other relevant policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- SEND and Inclusion Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Settling-In and Transition procedures.
- Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Complaints Policy.

- Equality and Diversity Policy.

The nursery will ensure that the key person system is implemented in accordance with the current **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework** and other relevant legislation and statutory guidance applicable to early years providers.