

LSA MONTESSORI

Key Person Policy

Policy first written	September 2016
Review dates (and amended if required)	

Principles:

- A Key Person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with their parents/carers.
- Each child will be assigned a Key Person. The Key Person may be changed to meet the needs of the child but, wherever possible, the child will keep this Key Person for the duration of their time at LSA Montessori.
- **All** nursery staff will build special relationships with **all** children.

Key Person: The Rationale

taken from the EYFS document

Secure Attachment

- Key Person helps the child to become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it.
- Key Person develops a genuine bond with children and offers a settled, close relationship.
- When children feel happy and secure in this way they are confident to explore and to try out new things.
- Even when children are older and can hold special people in mind for longer, there is still a need for them to have a key person to depend on in the setting.

Shared Care

- Key Person meets the needs of each child in their care and responds sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- Key Person talks to parents/carers to make sure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.
- A close emotional relationship with a Key Person in the setting does not undermine children's ties with their own parents/carers.
- Careful records of the child's development and progress are created and shared by parents/carers, the child, the Key Person and other professionals as necessary.

Independence

- Children become independent by being able to depend upon adults for reassurance and comfort.
- Children's independence is most obvious when they feel confident and self-assured, such as when they are in their own home with family, or with friends and familiar carers such as a Key Person.
- Children are likely to be much less independent when they are in new situations, such as a new group or when they feel unwell or anxious.

Effective Practice

The children at LSA Montessori are assigned a Key Person who will be able to meet their needs, however all staff are able to act as Key Person for all children should the need arise. Some of our children come into nursery at times when their Key Person is not available and so it is essential that all staff know all children well. We pride ourselves in good communication between staff and between staff and parents/carers which makes this possible.

At the beginning and end of each session there is always a short time for parents/carers to speak to the Key Person (or an alternative member of staff). This may take place in the baby or main room, or if somewhere more private is needed, in the office. If parents/carers wish to speak more comprehensively with a member of staff, then an appointment can be made.

Challenges and Dilemmas

Reassuring others that children will not become too dependent on a Key Person or find it difficult to adjust to being a member of a group.

- Although we know that having a Key Person is a very important part of Early Year's Education, we are also aware that all children need to be able to operate effectively within the setting as an individual and as part of a group. To this end, we will ensure that children do not become too dependent on their Key Person to the detriment of their membership of the group.

Meeting children's needs for a Key Person while being concerned for staff who may feel over-attached to a child.

- As we work together closely as a staff, we are able to talk freely amongst each other and resolve any difficulties with regard to specific adult: children relationships.

Reassuring parents/carers who may be concerned that children may be more attached to staff than them.

- Our close relationship with parents/carers enables us to speak freely to them and for them to speak freely with us. We would always remain professional with the children in our care, whilst giving them the nurturing, attention and support that they need. Should parents/carers need further reassuring, we would do everything in our power to enable them to recognise their relationship with their child.

Supporting children's transitions within and beyond a setting, particularly as children reach four or five years old.

Every Child Matters Outcomes

- **Stay Safe**

A Key Person will make sure each child stays safe within the nursery and outside. S/he will also monitor the children's emotional well-being at nursery to make sure they are feeling safe outside of nursery too.

- **Be Healthy**

A Key Person will ensure that each child takes part in healthy practices such as washing hands before snack and after toileting, eating some fruit at snack time and having a drink of milk or water. The Key Person will ensure that each child takes part in some exercise during the day either structured (eg dancing or PE sessions) or unstructured (eg outdoor play).

- **Enjoy and Achieve**

A Key Person will make sure that each child enjoys their time at nursery and s/he will monitor and track their achievements alongside their parent/carer.

- **Make a Positive Contribution**

A Key Person will help to enable each child to experience belonging to the nursery community and understanding their role within it, including responsibility for the environment. The Key Person will encourage each child to understand the difference between right and wrong. The Key Person will put each child's personal views at the heart of planning and delivering the curriculum. The Key Person will help develop the ability to disagree respectfully and stand up for themselves.

- **Achieve Economic Well-Being**

The Key Person will ensure that each child experiences a curriculum that will allow them to grow and develop into individuals prepared for working life, to be able to flourish in the workplace.

Key Person Arrangements

Each member of staff will have a group of children. Primarily s/he will be responsible for the following particular details for those children:-

- Liaising with parents/carers over day to day matters
- Completing observations on each child
- Keeping each child's records up to date
- Review the records of the children in their group each half term
- Sharing information on each child with other members of staff at staff meetings
- Parents/carers will be given a "Get to know your Key Person" profile sheet so that all of the people involved with the child know who the Key Person is.