



**CHELSEA OPEN AIR NURSERY SCHOOL
&
CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

SETTLING IN, INDUCTION & TRANSITION POLICY

**REFORMATTED NOVEMBER 2004
REDRAFTED JUNE 2008**

Induction, Settling in & Transition Policy

Induction

At the beginning of the term in which the child is offered a place, you will be invited to visit the nursery with your child to meet his/her keyworker and other staff.

We encourage families to settle their child properly in nursery, to guarantee a firm foundation. No child is allowed to stay without a parent/carer on their first visit and after that staff guide parents/carers as to the most appropriate time to leave their child. Children only stay longer from their second day or as their keyworker feels is appropriate to their developmental stage.

During that first term of admission parents will be offered informal conversations to discuss how their child has settled in at nursery and any concerns they may have.

1) COA visit

If your child does have a place at the nursery you will be invited to come together for an induction session. This is a chance for your child to explore the environment and meet their keyworker and some staff at a quieter time when staff can concentrate on getting to know the child and family as well as starting to share what COA can offer.

2) Home Visit

For certain children with individual needs it may be more appropriate to get to know them in the familiar surroundings of his/her own home. This ensures a happy and secure relationship is formed, with the keyworker. For this reason we hope to agree a mutually convenient time for this short and very informal get together. We like to come a few days before your child's starting date bringing with us books and puppets etc.

3) Starting Nursery School

All staff will be working with you and your child but their "keyworker" is their special person who will not only help you through the settling in phase, but also listens to any concerns you may have as time goes by. They will keep you informed of your child's progress at the nursery, working with you to ensure your child is happy and accessing the broad, balanced curriculum.

Please be prepared to stay at the nursery with your child until they are properly settled in. This means a minimum of one session but usually several. Occasionally, this can mean several weeks. It is very important that your child is settled properly to ensure a positive start to their nursery education.

During your child's time at Chelsea Open Air, we will welcome your help to collect information about your child's development and evidence of his/her achievements. These will be kept in a profile, which is confidential to a family and other professionals involved in your child's education at school. The profile helps us plan for your child's learning. When your child leaves, the profile is given to you to keep and is a record of their achievements and developments at nursery.

For your child's first term they will follow our induction system which is about getting to know them, their interests and needs. Therefore there will be less observations etc. put in the profile as a result.

Around the time of your child's 4th birthday, your keyworker will invite you to meet and discuss your child's progress and profile. Just before your child leaves to move to their new school your keyworker will invite you in to look at your child's leavers report.

You can borrow your child's profile to take home to share with family but please ensure your keyworker knows as these documents are irreplaceable.

Settling in

Our aims:

- To work closely with you.
- To support your child in the move from home, family and familiar people, into the new community of the nursery and then onto their next school, which you are responsible for arranging.
- To help your child make a strong attachment to his or her key worker.
- To help your child feel secure and confident in nursery.
- To work with you to help your child with any difficulties that might arise.
- To ensure a happy child who is learning in nursery.

Helping your child to settle in:

We would like to welcome you and your child to COA. We hope that you get to know us and have a happy and successful time with us. We look forward to getting to know you.

Children settle into COA in lots of different ways. Some children will confidently settle into the nursery as soon as they come in. Other children may be nervous and anxious about leaving their beloved parent. Most children will be somewhere in between.

Please be reassured and try not to worry if your child experiences difficulties - it is a very normal part of a child's development to be anxious, nervous or angry about starting nursery. We also recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you.

Please remember that we require all parents and carers to help their children settle in. No matter how confident you feel your child is, we will insist that you follow our settling in procedures. In our experience, all children benefit greatly when the nursery works closely with the family on settling in.

Children can be helped to settle in by their parents, and other important people who they know well and can be comforted by – aunts, uncles, childminders and grandparents for example.

The induction & settling-in period:

Different children need different amounts of time to settle in. We recommend that you plan for two weeks to support your child. Some parents have asked us to give an idea of what the process will be like. It is different for every child, but we have given a rough outline of what to expect at the end of this leaflet.

The settling in period is the time when you are here with your child in the nursery. It is a time for your child to get to know his or her key worker – with the reassurance of having you here too. As the relationship develops, your child will be able to trust that:

- The key worker and other staff in the nursery are able to meet his or her needs
- They can be helpful, comforting and deal positively with any problems
- They can provide interesting experiences, which make it worthwhile to come to nursery.

The settling in process gives **you** a chance to check out:

- What type of nursery this is.
- How the staff work & get to know them.
- What kinds of experiences we offer to the children.

You will be able to see how we:

- Get to know your child.
- Play with children.
- Talk with them.
- Have fun together.
- Set boundaries for children.
- Deal with difficult behaviour.

You are always welcome to ask about how we work and how we deal with particular situations.

In our experience, settling in takes a minimum of two weeks -although this will vary greatly from one child to another and induction takes at least a term. Our aim is to settle children in at their own pace – when children are ready to move away from their parents, we will encourage and support this. We have found that in the long run, this means happier and better settled children – and parents! The process often goes like this:

1. **The school induction visit or home visit** (if you chose to have one). This can be very special for a child – often children remember their first visit for a long time who they met and what they did. The visit gives us helpful information about your child and it enables your child to begin an attachment with the key worker.
2. **Your child spending time in the nursery with you.** During this induction time, you are available to support your child, to ease the transition for your child from home to nursery, and to help staff get to know your child. At this stage it might be best to be **available** to your child **but not too interesting!** In other words, it might be best to avoid getting deeply involved in your child's play at this time. This allows members of staff to make a judgement about engaging your child in experiences. However, you are the parent and we will support you in judging how to handle this for the best. We are aware that both you and your child may be feeling stress at some points, and your child may not appear to be on "best behaviour". Please don't worry about this – it is all part of the process. As adults, if we try to relax as much as possible and remain confident, this will help children.
3. **Your child spending time in the nursery whilst you are in another part of the building.** It will be up to you and the key worker to discuss when your child is ready for this step. This means that your child has the opportunity to explore the nursery and have his or her needs met by the key worker and the rest of the staff. This might be for quite a short period of time at first, and then for longer stretches of time. If you have younger children with you, then we will try to provide a space for them to play and tea or coffee for you. It is very important that you say clearly to your child that you will be leaving the nursery. It is tempting to nip out when your child is busy, but if your child turns round a few minutes later to find you have unexpectedly gone, he or she may be really

distraught. It is essential that you do not leave the building without talking with your key worker first.

4. **Finally, it is for you to judge – with the support of your key worker – when your child is ready to be left in the nursery with the staff.** Your child might be very sad at the moment of parting, but if the settling in process has gone well, he or she will be able to manage this with the support of the key worker and other members of staff. If your child continues to be upset after you have gone, please be reassured that we would contact you and **would not** put your child through an ordeal. It is still important for you to say goodbye to your child clearly, so that your child knows what is going on and can express how he or she feels about it. Some parents find it easiest to set a limit on how long they will stay at dropping-off time, for example “I’ll read two books with you and then it will be time for me to go.” It is up to you how you manage this, but please do ask for support or advice if it will be helpful. It is not uncommon for a child to settle very well into the nursery, and then unexpectedly a few weeks later to find it difficult to come in. This might be for any one of a variety of reasons, and again we will offer our support or help if you would like it.

5. **At any stage of the process –** if you would like to talk to someone, or need ideas, or support, or help...then please talk to your key worker or the Head. It is best to arrange to do this in a private space – not in front of your child or at the front door during registration.

As a staff, we are committed to working closely and supportively with parents and carers. We look forward to developing a relationship with you.

Please let us know if you find this leaflet helpful – or if you would like to suggest changes to it. Most of our best learning comes through getting feedback from parents and carers.

What will happen in the settling in period?

All children are different. We have given a rough guide below to the stages most children go through when settling-in.

Part-time places (morning or afternoon):

Stage 1	Parent/carer and child spend two hours together in the nursery
Stage 2	Parent/carer and child spend two hours in the nursery. If appropriate, the child will spend 20 minutes in the nursery without the parent/carer. Parent/carer needs to stay in the building (e.g. in the parent’s room).
Stage 3	Child builds up to 1½ hours in the nursery without the parent/carer. Parent/carer stays in the building.
Stage 4	Child spends 1½ hours in the nursery without parent/carer
Stage 5	Child spends full 2½ hours in the nursery.

Full time places:

Stage 1	Parent/carer and child spend two hours together in nursery (9-11am)
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Stage 2	Parent/carer and child spend an hour and a half in the nursery. If appropriate, the child will spend 20 minutes in the nursery without the parent/carer. Parent/carer needs to stay in the building.
Stage 3	Child builds up to 2½ hours in the nursery without the parent/carer. Parent/carer stays in the building.
Stage 4	Child spends 2½ hours in the nursery without parent/carer.
Stage 5	Child comes to nursery at 9am and stays for lunch. Parent/carer picks child up at 12.30pm.
Stage 6	Child comes to nursery at 9am, stays for lunch and through to 1pm, then 2pm.
Stage 7	Child comes to nursery at 9am and stays until 3pm.
Stage 8	Child spends full session in nursery, from 9am until 3.30pm.

Transitions

Transition Matters:

It is as important to deal with endings and changes for children and families as beginnings both in the short and long term as has been proven by lots of research. This is because there can be changes in the child's identity in a new place, which results in being a new person with a new identity. Think about all those bigger children, unfamiliar adults, in a bigger place with different rules and new words attached! Think about uniform, desks, assembly, playtime-all new experiences for the young child! Hence we invest time in transitions by:

- staggered entry dates
- sharing of information
- quality partnership meeting time for parents/carers
- special learning experiences which support the child's understanding of the likely changes
- more 1-1 time and quality group experiences e.g. stories, photos, discussions
- two way visits to experience new routines for children depending upon the pre school setting or primary school
- sharing of information with teaching staff about what will help children feel confident in their new surroundings

Thus transition is a process which is ongoing throughout life which children can be supported to anticipate, be resilient and manage confidently via the growth of relationships and friendships. Our children are supported in their transition from home or other pre school setting to COA and then onwards into their primary school.

You can help your child by:

- Ensuring you apply for a primary school place and complete the relevant forms at the time announced by the local authority.
- If you don't get the place you desired dealing with it as an adult and not casting despair and worry on to your child.
- Talking sensitively with them about their next steps whilst discouraging siblings, friends etc from giving negative messages such as "Hard work", "You'll get into trouble if you do that" or "Write properly-you're not a baby anymore."
- Remembering that going to primary school is different to when you first started!
- Starting to introduce the new experiences gradually and positively such as buying uniform, visiting the school, walking or going on the bus to practice how long it will take to get there.
- Asking staff for advice (out of the child's hearing) when experiencing a problem.
- Stressing the fun they will have.

We support our leavers particularly during the term in which they leave us by trying to reduce differences in the curricular experiences they have here at COA and in their next school, by developing their independence still further and by strengthening their confidence and competence to face challenges and persist with difficulties. This may occur through all or any of the following as appropriate:

- Taking messages for adults
- Asking questions of adults
- Support for friendships and social learning
- Extending their ability to concentrate and engage for longer periods in stories, group and focus activities at their stage of development
- Particular individual experiences designed to meet particular interests and needs
- Expeditions into the local community in small groups
- Undertaking their own individual leaver's self assessment to capture their views on their nursery education with the Headteacher
- Celebration events such as the leaver's theatre expedition in the autumn term and leaver's picnic in the summer
- Plus the leaver's sharing on the final day of term when children "graduate" to their next schools, receive their leaver's certificate and say farewell (You are welcome to attend this event)

We also complete their profile of achievement for you and your child to take to their next teacher in order that they can see and understand the breadth and depth of your child's learning achievements whilst at COA and thus build upon them.

You will also be invited to read, comment and sign your child's leaver's report. This borough wide document gives a descriptive, factual picture of their learning across the Early Years Foundation Stage which continues into Reception. You will be given a copy of this and a copy will be sent to your child's next school.