



Settling New Children Policy

At Whitsers our aim is for children, in the absence of their parents/carers, to become happy and confident at pre-school as quickly as possible. We believe whilst children are unhappy and anxious they will not benefit from the learning opportunities on offer. To achieve this:

On applying for a place you will receive an admissions pack, which includes amongst other things an "All about Me" form.

We recommend that you arrange at least two "Pre admission" visits to pre-school with your child. These should be made in the weeks close to your child starting at Whitsers and you will be expected to stay with your child during these visits. These visits are really important because they allow your child to become familiar with the pre-school environment and routine whilst you are there with them. This allows you time to ask any questions and explore the setting with your child, so you can talk to your child about their time at the setting before they start.

During your visit you will be introduced to all staff attending that day. Your Key Worker will be allocated ready for your start date. On your last visit we will be able to discuss your child's individual plan for your child's first day. We are very flexible but do not have a set policy as all children will settle differently.

On your child's first day you will be very welcome to stay with your child for the first and as many subsequent sessions as you wish until you feel confident about leaving. The staff will be available to give advice and discuss any worries you may have.

When you decide to leave your child, we do ask that you say goodbye and not try to slip away unnoticed. This may cause your child to cry initially but is much kinder than your child suddenly realising you have gone and feeling abandoned. If your child were to cry and could not be distracted we would contact you to come back and take them home. You are welcome to telephone the pre-school as often as you wish to check your child's progress. If you leave your child distressed, a member of staff will send you a text or email, perhaps with a photo, to reassure you. Some children may have an unsettled spell at pre-school weeks after starting and this is not unusual. If this happens we will start the settling process all over again until your child feels confident again.

Your child's Key Worker will be available at the beginning and end of the session to discuss your child's day.

If You Feel Your Child is Not Settling at Whitsers

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This is not unusual some children just take longer to settle than others but it can be distressing so here are some points which may help.

- Remember that your child will have the “one to one” attention of a staff member whilst they are settling and this person will update you at the end of each session.
- The staff, who have many years’ experience, have numerous different methods to draw upon to help a shy or sad child to settle.
- We suggest you arrive slightly late to avoid busy time and collect earlier, gradually increasing the time spent in the setting until they feel more confident with us.
- Also remember that for your child’s sake, you too will need to be strong! As if a child feels that a parent is sad or anxious they may think they have something real to fear. It is not unusual for a child to feel anxious about coming to pre-school whilst settling in, they may even cry at home before leaving the house, but once at pre-school, with support, they will be enjoying the activities and we would contact you if they were not.

If you wish to discuss your child’s unsettled start or make a new “settling plan” with the staff it is better to do this on the telephone, rather than with your child listening as they may feel that their sadness is a real problem.

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