

Redwood Montessori Nursery

Settling In Policy

Statement of intent

1. At Redwood Montessori Nursery we want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their child's well being and their own role as active partners with the nursery.

Aim

2. We aim to make the setting a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Methods

3. Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our settling - in procedures aim to assist parents to help their child to feel comfortable in the nursery, to benefit from what it has to offer, to be happy to stay with their key person and to be confident that their parents will return at the end of the session. We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker; their distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from setting. It can also be disruptive and can contribute to triggering similar distress in other children who would otherwise be settled.

4. At Redwood Montessori Nursery, we use the following methods to better integrate and induct the younger children into the setting:

a. Before a child starts attending the nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents/carers with information. These include written information (including our prospectus), policies, and individual meetings with parents.

b. During the month before the child starts we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents/carer to visit the nursery. We encourage both parents and child to attend our orientation day that is held before the start of each Academic year.

c. We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family before he/she starts to attend; the key person welcomes, gets to know and looks after the child and his/her parents/carers at the child's first session and during the settling-in process.

d. When a child starts attending the setting, we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents/carer and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the nursery. New children will be invited to attend the nursery for a maximum of 2 hour sessions for the first week of term. Returning children will also attend nursery for 2 hours for the first few days and resume to their normal schedule thereafter.

e. We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay in the setting, but not in the classroom, during these settling in periods. Children are encouraged to bring any special comforters, which may help them settle more easily, i.e. soft toy, dummy, muslin.

f. Depending on how freely the child moves around the room and if they have shown acceptance of their key person, the parent or carer may then, with the child's knowledge, leave the room for a short period of time.

g. We encourage the parent/carers to leave their child after approximately 10 minutes if they feel their child is ready. In the event that your child may not be prepared to separate from you, we suggest you remain in the environment for an hour and leave with him/her and return the next day. If you have left your child and he/she becomes extremely unsettled we will ask you to return to calm him/her down and make sure that your child leaves on a positive note.

h. We also may suggest you slowly increase your child's time at the nursery, if he shows signs of anxiety. These periods of time can gradually increase as and when the child's confidence grows until eventually the child stays in Nursery for a full day¹.

i. Parents/carers must be prepared to accept that it may take some time for their child to adjust to the nursery, but very few children fail to settle eventually. We find that parents staying with their child and then leaving him/her for short periods, eases the separation process. Please remember, the more your child comes and experiences the activities on offer and sees you interacting with the staff, the more settled he/she will feel.

j. Younger children typically take longer to settle, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent/carers to be on hand to re-settle them.

k. We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person and settled in the environment. For example, the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.

l. When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when. We strongly advise parents not to leave their children on their own until at least their second visit. The nursery has a parent room available where parents can watch their child on the Nursery's webcam whilst their child is in the classroom. Following the settling in period, we ask you to inform the front desk if you would like to view your child through the CCTV camera during his/her time at nursery.

m. We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child routinely and continually finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children. Settling of such children will take time and the support and assistance parents and carers can give to the Redwood Montessori Nursery staff will be instrumental in making the process as rapid and stress free for the child as possible.

¹ It is only when the child is happy and secure in the Nursery routine and also in the knowledge that their parent/carer will leave and return that their stay in Nursery can be lengthened