Settling in Policy

Little Stars Nursery staff wishes to provide the best possible care for all children in partnership with parents and carers.  
To do this, we arrange a settling-in period for each child and parent/carer to become familiar with the Little Stars Nursery routine, establishment, and staff. It is also vital for the child to develop a positive relationship with his/her allocated key Worker so that he/she feels confident and secure when his/her parents leave them.  
Every child is different, and the settling-in period can vary.  
It will often be their first separation from a familiar person; however, this can usually be achieved in one or two weeks. The length of time a child spends at Little Stars Nursery and the length of time they are being left will gradually be extended until the agreed hours are reached. How quickly this is achieved will be discussed and agreed upon between the parents/carers and the allocated Key Worker and adapted to meet individual needs.  
Please be patient; the settling-in process can take time and commitment. We at Little Stars Nursery think it is a necessary process, which enables children to settle happily and confidently into the Nursery and allows parents to do so.  
When a child attends the Little Stars Nursery for the first time, the parent is asked to allow for at least a week to facilitate the settling in process.  
Part-time children should/will be settled in on a full-time basis if at all possible.  
In some emergency admissions, however, it will not be possible to follow these procedures.  
Each child’s allocated Key Worker will be responsible for this settling-in period.  
The process and timelines below are a guide:  
  
Typical First Week  
  
Day One: The child attends Little Stars Nursery for 1-2 hours with the parent/ carer and spends time with their allocated Key Worker and the other children.  
  
Day Two: The child attends for an extended period (3 to 4 hours, including lunch) with the parent/carer. The parent/carer stays with the child for the first half an hour, then leaves the Little Stars Nursery for 10-15 minutes; if the child seems happy, the parent/carer will stay in the surrounded area for up to 30 min then return to spend the remaining time with the child.  
  
Day Three: The child attends with their parent/carer for half a day.  
The parent/carer stays with the child for the first hour then leaves the Little Stars Nursery for an hour; if the child seems happy, the parent/carer should return at lunchtime to sit with their child.  
Day Four: The parent/carer settles their child for 15-20 minutes before leaving, then returns after lunch.  
  
Day Five: The parent/carer settles their child then leaves for most of the session, returning only if their child becomes distressed.  
  
If time permits to send a quick message, update, WhatsApp, or picture during the day; the key Worker will be responsible for doing it for the first couple of days when the child is left without the parents. All other daily updates will be shared with the parents on our Baby’s Days system. There is a phone app available for every parent to upload on their device.  
Parents are also welcome to call to check how the child,s day is going.  
  
Please bear with us if we do not message or respond immediately – our priority is looking after your children, and we spend the majority of our time with the children in the nursery group. Please be assured that, if we need to, we will contact you quickly to share information or update you on your child. Please see our separate policy about our online information sharing, development record, and messaging app; Baby’s Days.  
  
The settling-in period may differ from child to child and is carried out at the child’s own pace as far as possible, so this may take longer than a week or two. Even though a child may appear to be initially unconcerned about whether the parent/carer stays or leaves, the parent/carer will be asked to stay as planned in case they change their mind later. The child’s allocated Key Worker will adapt the settling-in procedure to suit the individual child (particularly if the child has any additional needs) and liaise with the parent/carer and the Little Stars Nursery Manager about your child’s progress.  
  
Set Nursery fees apply during the settling-in period.  
The First 3 short days of settling in will be free of charge, and the following days will be charged at half or a daily price. If the child settles quicker than 3 days, fees will apply earlier.   
  
DUE TO COVID, THESE PROCEDURES MAY VARY. PLEASE CONSULT WITH THE NURSERY MANAGEMENT TEAM FOR MORE INFORMATION!  
During the pandemic, we ask that parents use the outdoor area as much as possible to reduce any risk of transmission. We may also request attendance when there is less contact with other families to reduce any risks. All families will be asked as standard to declare health status (symptoms / any recent test results etc.)