Aldbourne Preschool

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**Policy: *Settling-in***

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This policy has been drawn up by the staff of the Preschool, in consultation with the Owners and parents.

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in our setting and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their child's well-being and in their role as active partners with us.

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.

* Before a child starts to attend, we will provide the parents with written information, which includes our prospectus and policies.
* We provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents or carers to visit the setting whenever convenient to families and pre-school and will provide any additional information regarding daily routines etc at these visits.
* We offer a home visit to provide the opportunity to meet the child in familiar surroundings and to enable us to focus our attention on the child and family.
* A settling-in booklet with pictures of staff will be available for parents to take home to talk about with their child so that they can become familiar with the people they will meet.
* At the first session we will meet with parents to welcome them and complete together an initial profile of their child and to jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
* We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the session during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child and increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
* Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have no previous experience of group care. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them
* We judge a child to be settled when they are happy to be at pre-school, are familiar with where things are and are pleased to see other children and join in with activities.
* When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
* There will always be a member of staff available to support a child when separating from their parent, if needed. The practitioner will prioritise the care-giving support on transition over other duties until the child no longer needs that extra support.
* We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who may appear to settle quickly are not ready to be left, so we expect that the parent will honour the commitment to stay for at least the first week.
* We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle. Young children need the security of a trusted adult with whom they can form a strong attachment in order to feel safe and begin to enjoy and explore. Any child who is distressed needs comfort from their significant attachment figure.
* We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.