

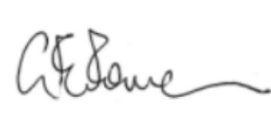
Ditchling (St. Margaret's) CE Primary and Nursery School

Settling-In Nursery



'Living life in all its fullness' John 10:10

Version	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date Approved	Next Review Date
5	ESCC Model	Head/FGB	Sept 2024	Sept 2026


Signed: Chair of Governors


Signed: _Headteacher

Introduction:

For most children, starting nursery is their first separation from their main carer as a result we recognise that 'parents are a child's first and most enduring educators' (Early Years Foundation Stage – Positive Relationships/Parents as Partners). Starting in a new setting is a major event in a child's life and this time of transition can be stressful for both children and parents/carers. To ensure that both children and parents/carers feel supported as they work towards feeling at ease in their new setting, at Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary and Nursery School we seek to ensure a smooth transition by working in close partnership with parents/carers. We believe that it is important for staff to take time to get to know the children and their parents/carers. The school aims to be fully accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. With this in mind we recognise that each child will start school with a diversity of individual experiences, attitudes, expectations and developmental differences. These need to be taken into account when settling each child into their new learning environment.

Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary School and Nursery aim to:

- Support the child feel confidence and secure in their new environment in the absence of their parent/carer.
- Make the children feel confident to explore and experiment in their new physical surroundings.
- Help the children to develop the independence required to freely access all of the resources available in their new environment.
- Support the children to develop positive relationships with both adults and other children.
- Help children to communicate their needs to others in an appropriate way.
- Promote appropriate behaviour, with clear expectations and positive reinforcements.
- Work in partnership with parents in their child's learning.
- Support children to build upon the prior experiences and knowledge they have gained in their home environment.
- Encourage and welcome open and honest communication between staff and parents.

As a staff we aim to:

- Show empathy and sensitivity towards new parents/carers and children.
- Be responsive and flexible by taking into account the individual needs and experiences of the children and parents/carers.
- Take time and provide the space to get to know new children and their parents/carers whilst they are settling-in.
- Organise and manage the environment in such a way that the children can operate independently, safely and imaginatively.

Guidelines and Procedures:

- The children and parents/carers are always warmly welcomed into our school.
- All children and their parents/carers are made very aware of their key person before they start in the nursery.
- Each key person is responsible for helping their group of children to become familiar with the nursery and to feel safe and confident within it.
- Each key person develops a genuine warm and caring professional relationship with each child in their group as well as the child's parents/carers.
- Each key person responds sensitively to the feelings, ideas and behaviour of each child in their group and endeavours to meet each child's particular needs and those of their parents.
- Information is provided to the parents /carers to familiarise them with daily routines and an overview of the termly and yearly events.
- Parents are asked to complete a 'Parent/Child Voice' (see nursery welcome pack), questionnaire before their child starts at the nursery in order to give us additional information about each child.
- Parents and children are invited to visit the nursery from 15.30 on a pre-arranged day through the school office, the term before their child is due to start. They will be able to experience the nursery in a relaxed atmosphere and ask any questions that they may have.
- There are 4 additional nursery visits available during the summer term that children can attend with their parents. **Children need to attend at least 1 visit session with their parent/carer before they can start.**
- Children will be left from their first day of nursery for increasing amounts of time so that they are attending a full session as soon as possible. (This will be agreed between staff and parents and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure the agreed plan continues to best meet the needs of the child.) Parents will be charged for the child's whole booked session.
- We encourage parents to leave their child after a short period of time, with the understanding that if the child has been upset at the separation, we will contact them soon after to reassure them that their child has settled.
- If the child continues to be upset staff will contact the parent/carer asking them to return to school.
- We offer and undertake ongoing, regular, informal discussions with parents/carers to enable us to build up a picture of their child and the previous experiences they have on arrival to nursery and share how each day is progressing and how their child is settling-in.
- Parents/carers are given opportunities to share what they know about their child either in written form or through informal discussions. This is used to help plan appropriate activities for the children.
- During the children's first sessions, activities and experiences provided in the nursery are geared towards helping the children settle into their new environment

and learn their new daily routines. (These are planned in response to how each child is progressing.)

- In Reception, children are invited into school for a series of transition sessions so that they can become familiar with the environment and the teacher/teaching assistant. A staggered start is offered so that staff and children get to know each other and the routines of school.
- Children joining our reception class are given a 'Reception Starting School Booklet' to complete and are assigned a 'buddy' to support them in their first few weeks. Teachers also use a new child checklist to ensure they are given all the information they need to feel comfortable and safe in their new school.
- A 'New Parent' questionnaire is given to all new parents after six weeks to gather feedback and to ensure we are doing all we can to make the process as smooth and happy as possible.

Ongoing policy review

Our Policy and Procedures for 'Settling-in' are always open and responsive to feedback from parents/carers and staff. If it is felt worthwhile and helpful additions any changes will be made to the process. We very much see it as a close collaboration between home and school as this is the best way to enable the very smoothest and happiest transition into Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary School and Nursery for all concerned – parents, child and staff.

Links to EYFS General Welfare Requirements

- Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

Links to other policies

Key Person Policy

Safeguarding policy

Visitors in Schools