

into the woods outdoor nursery

Settling Guidance

At Into The Woods we understand the importance of the settling process and are committed to making it as stress free as possible. We approach settling in a flexible open-minded way, and try to find out what works for each individual child.

How it will work

The nursery manager will contact you to arrange two settling visits, normally the week before your child's full sessions start. We suggest that for the first hour visit you should stay with your child and for the second visit, once they have got to know the staff a little, you could pop to the café for 20mins or so to give your child the experience of you going and coming back. We will play this by ear and if your child is upset at the idea, then you can stay on site, but take more of a background position. Sit somewhere your child can see you but watch more from a distance.

When the timetable starts properly, you are welcome to stay until your child feels more settled; although it can be counterproductive if this continues for too long. You may need to be there for settling for another two visits at least, depending on how your child is feeling.

After approximately 4 weeks we will invite you to a settling review meeting with your child's key person, to discuss how your child is getting on.

Sometimes after a holiday or absence your child may need to be helped to settle again. We will support you in this.

What to expect

It may be a smooth, easy process, but the more you are prepared, the easier it will seem. It's very common for a child to cry at moment of separation from their main carer and be fine moments afterwards. It's a normal response until your child learns through experience that you are leaving, but you are coming back.

Preparing your child

Maybe they are already used to this separation and have experience of being looked after by adults other than you. If not, you could try this with a close friend that they know well for short periods before they start nursery. It's important to always emphasise that you are coming back. Be specific as possible. "I'm going to the shops, Claire will look after you, I'll be back when you have had your lunch."

Always say goodbye to your child before you go. It's tempting to leave quietly when they are happily playing, as you don't want to disturb them and risk upsetting them. But if they look up and you have gone, they are left with the insecure feeling that you could disappear at any time.

Keep goodbyes as brief as possible – decide you are going then a quick kiss, reminder when you'll be back and leave. The more drawn out it is, the longer that feeling of separation lasts.

Please be aware of the signals you are giving your child. If you look worried or upset you will make your child feel more worried and upset. They will look to you for reassurance that this is a safe place and that you trust the people you are leaving them with. It is important to smile at your child and say reassuring words at the moment of separation.

Remember we are used to settling children into nursery and will be very patient and know how to help them through it. It sometimes takes a while, but in the end most children will be running in happily every day.

Many parents take their children to the woods to get them familiar with the environment before they start, and it's great if you can do that. For the first half term we will stick to a few regular sites for the children to get comfortable with those areas.

Key person

As we are a small nursery, all the adults will be part of your child's experience. But, your child will be designated a member of staff that is their 'key person'. The key person's role is to focus on your child's development and be your main point of contact. They will learn your child's preferences and any requirements, so they feel at home as soon as possible. Before your first visit we will email you fill in an *All About my Child* form which will give us some information about your child's stage of development and their interests. On one of your first visits or sessions your key person will sit with you and go through the form. We will use this information to help us support and engage your child.

We will work in partnership with you throughout your child's time with us to ensure they have the best possible experience at Into The Woods. If you have any questions or concerns give me a call or email me anytime.

Policy review

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