

Settling-in Policy

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of support, help and friendship and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in the playgroup.

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. In order to accomplish this, we will;

- Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include directing parents to our website and Social Media platforms, displays about activities available within the setting, and fund raising events.
- We give parents an 'All About Me' sheets to complete about their child. This sheet is used by the Key person as a tool to help the child settle. Children can bring in favourite toys but parents must be aware that practitioners cannot be responsible for keeping them clean and children will be encouraged to share.
- Encourage parents to visit the Playgroup with their children during the weeks before an admission is planned. Two teachers will where possible visit a child's home to meet the family and collect pertinent information. (See Home Visit Policy).
- Introduce flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families and children.
- Introduce new families into the group on a staggered basis for example 2 new children a day a week rather than 10 new children all at once.
- Some younger children may take longer to settle in, 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 to be on hand to re-settle them. We reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into Playgroup.

We judge a child to be settled when they happily separate from their parents and have begun to form a relationship with their key person; 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.

- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from setting. However, some children can respond negatively to physical comfort or attention and so may be left to assess their surroundings by themselves for a short period.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it continually distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our setting procedures aim to help parents to help their children feel comfortable in the playgroup, to benefit from what it has to offer and to be confident that their own parents will return at the end of the session.
- We send photos to the parents of their children when they are settled so they are not worrying all day.
- We have a visual timetable which helps some children know how the session runs and what is coming up next.
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This policy was adopted at a meeting of Belton Playgroup Association:

Held on: 2nd June 2026

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Spencer". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Signed on behalf of committee:

Name and role of signatory: Anna Spencer, Chair of Committee

Review date: April 2027