

Steelstown Nursery Unit Policy on Settling In



February 2018

It is the policy of Steelstown Nursery Unit to make the transition from the home to nursery school as happy and fruitful for the children as possible. We do this initially by preparing parents for the admission of their children and having prepared a warm, welcoming environment, to admit children gradually, allowing each child to become familiar with adults and peers in the presence of his/her parents. We will encourage separation only when the child is ready to accept it.

How do we implement our settling in policy?

Prior to admission, each child and their parents' visit the school on an open day. During this visit the children will meet their teacher and some of the other children they will be starting nursery with. This open day gives the children an opportunity to meet their teacher and the other staff members in an unthreatening way and with no pressure to stay. They will also be familiar with the location of the nursery, the layout of the classroom and playground and some of the play equipment available.

In a separate information meeting for parents only, parents are provided with the Parent's Information Book and Children's booklet and information is relayed to them regarding important points of nursery policy.

Starting dates for children and symbols will be given out at this meeting. Parents will be given a personal Home Visit timetable meeting held at the end of August.

At these meetings parents are asked to provide information regarding their child which will enable us to get to know their child better and ensure a smooth settling in period.

At this meeting parents are also given the opportunity to discuss issues of a private or delicate nature in confidence.

At the open day parents are invited to pop into the nursery again for a short visit if passing if they feel their child needs a little bit of extra reassurance.

Our aim is that as a result of this familiarisation the children will recognise the staff and their classroom when they first start school. Children will be phased into nursery school gradually. We will admit the youngest children initially to acquaint them with the nursery routines.

New children will be admitted to nursery gradually. They will join the returning children and will be phased in and will stay for 1 hour during the first week. Each week the children's stay at nursery will be lengthened to include routines such as story, outdoor play and break if appropriate for each individual child, until he/she attains full day attendance.

This gradual phasing in of individual children give the staff the opportunity to make new children feel important and welcome and to ensure that parents are given a better opportunity to get to know the staff and for positive relationships to begin.

All children are different. Some are happy to wave good-bye to their parents immediately, others are less happy to do so. On day one, children will be accompanied to the nursery by his/her parents for 1 hour. During this first day visit the child will be shown the toilets, where the aprons are put and where different activities are set out. Additionally, they will be given a symbol and shown where to hang their coats. The children will be given a variety of simple equipment to play with. If the child is happy to stay without their parent, parents will then be encouraged to leave and return in an hour.

The teacher will speak to parents regarding any information or any concerns they may have. The nursery staff are happy for parents to stay as long as is necessary at this stage.

On subsequent days, the parent may leave the nursery saying that they are going to the shop or to have a cup of tea. They should explain to their child where they are going and that they will be back shortly, before leaving the classroom. It is crucial that parents return promptly otherwise children will begin to doubt their parents and teacher's reliability and so jeopardise the whole settling in process.

If the child is happy to let the parent leave, their stay can be lengthened each week.

If the child has difficulty with the parent leaving, parents should be reassured that the staff is experienced at dealing with settling in these small children. Any parent who feels anxious about their child may phone the school to speak to a member of staff who will update them.

Sometimes children will settle quickly but then regress as more children arrive and they realise that they will be coming to nursery every day. We want to reassure you that if this happens to your child, we will comfort them and this usually solves the problem.

Very occasionally, a child will not separate in the early weeks. It may be necessary to stop them coming until all the other children have joined the group and then start the settling process again. Usually when all the other children have settled we will have more time to give to an individual child. The reason for this is that no one wants to see a child crying to the point of sickness. It is better for the child that the settling process be paused for a couple of weeks, and then recommenced. Please be assured that should this happen to your child, he or she will settle in time.

Special needs children will be admitted at the beginning or end of the settling in period, depending on the child's needs in consultation with parents and other professionals balancing the needs of the other children.

If any underage children who will be 2 full years at nursery are to be admitted this will be at the end of the settling in period when all correct age children have been admitted.

Children stay for dinner end of September and go home directly afterwards. Full day begins in first week of October.

Parents are reminded that the settling in process is a very important time for staff to develop positive relationships with the children. Morning times are particularly busy and the children's needs must always come first. Therefore, it is important for parents to remember that staff would prefer it if parents waited until the afternoon to discuss any non immediate issues or concerns they may have with the nursery or their child.

We know that you will understand and support us in this and realise that we have your child's best interests at heart.

Parents are also asked to bring the children to the nursery punctually and to attend regularly so that the children can get the most out of their nursery experience.

All procedures are flexible and the child sets the pace of settling- in however, we will constantly review our practice in this area.

