

Settling In and Transitions Policy

Written by: Louise Lloyd-Evans

Date Written: 28 July 2025

Next Review Due: July 2026

Our Values

At Young Friends, settling is never just about attendance — it's about emotional readiness, relationship-building, and building trust in the unfamiliar. Transitions are treated with warmth, patience, and intention.

- **Sustainability** – Secure beginnings support long-term wellbeing
 - **Respect** – Every child and family settles differently — and that's expected
 - **Authenticity** – We don't force separation or pretend tears aren't real
 - **Supportive Leadership** – Staff are trained to read emotional cues and hold space
 - **Community** – Parents and carers are true partners in the settling journey
-

Policy Statement

This policy outlines our approach to helping children transition smoothly into Young Friends Kindergarten and between rooms. We work flexibly, but purposefully, to help each child feel emotionally safe and connected from the beginning.

The Young Friends Settling Approach

We offer **three key settling sessions** across a single week:

Session 1 – *With Parent/Carer Present*

- 1 hour
- Child explores the space with their parent
- Key person begins introductions and light interaction
- Opportunity for relaxed conversation with the parent

Session 2 – *Short Separation (if appropriate)*

- 2 hours
- Parent is welcome to stay onsite or in the office
- Child is gently supported by key person to stay alone (if ready)
- Parent and staff reflect afterwards

Session 3 – *Full Morning Session*

- 3–4 hours (typical morning duration)
 - Full participation in group routines
 - Staff monitor wellbeing, transitions and attachment signs
 - Debrief with parent if needed
-

Flexibility and Extension

- These sessions can be **adapted or extended** as needed
 - Some children settle within two sessions; others may need two weeks or more
 - Families are reassured that we will take the **child's lead**
 - Additional stay-and-play sessions may be offered
-

Preparing Families

We support families with:

- A **Settling Information Pack** with tips on preparing emotionally and practically
- Encouragement to talk about nursery with their child positively
- Guidance on creating a calm goodbye ritual
- Honest discussion about feelings — for children and adults alike

We remind families that **tears are not failure** — they are part of emotional growth and new attachments.

Transitions Between Rooms

At Young Friends:

- Children **start in Hedgehogs** (0–2 years) and move to **Foxes** (2–5 years)
- Wherever possible, they **retain the same key person** to maintain attachment
- Transitions are planned gradually:
 - Short visits to the new room
 - Familiar adults escort and support the child
 - Time to build confidence before a full move

We ensure:

- Clear communication with parents
 - Emotional preparation with the child
 - Flexibility around timing
-

Staff Roles and Key Person Relationships

- The **key person** leads settling and supports the family relationship
 - Buddies and wider team members support when needed
 - Managers monitor settling journeys and check in with parents/carers
 - We use **observation, not assumption** to assess readiness and wellbeing
-

Children with SEND or Additional Needs

For children with more complex needs:

- Settling plans are personalised
 - External professionals or SEND team may be involved
 - Key staff may receive additional training or resources
 - Parents/carers are consulted at every stage
-

Linked Policies

- Key Person Policy
 - Behaviour and Relationships
 - Partnership with Families
 - Safeguarding
 - Equalities and Inclusion
-

Authorisation

 Louise Lloyd-Evans

Owner and Director

Young Friends Kindergarten

89 Holland Road, Hove, BN3 1JP