

09 Childcare practice procedures

**09.4 Prime times – Settling in and transitions**

To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children need to form attachments with the adults who care for them, primarily a key person, but others too. In this way they feel part of a community; they are able to contribute to that community and receive from it. Very young children, especially two- to three-year-olds, approach separation from their parent with anxieties, older children have a more secure understanding of ‘people permanence’ and are able to approach new experiences with confidence; but also need time to adjust and feel secure. It is the entitlement of all children to be settled comfortably into a new environment.

**Settling-in for and those with SEND**

* If a child has been identified as having SEND then the key person/SENCO and parents will need to identify and address potential barriers to settling in e.g. timings of medication and invasive procedures, specific routines and levels of support.

# Promoting proximity

* On the visit to setting the parent is shown around by a mnager, they are introduced to members of staff, and explained how the day is organised, making the parent and child feel welcome and comfortable.

**Promoting secure base**

* When the young child has experienced different times of the day, these are then fitted together to establish continuity of the day.
* When the parent leaves, they always say goodbye and say they are coming back. Parents should never slip away without the child noticing; this leads to greater distress.

**When a parent is unable or refuses to take part in settling in**

* Information about the ‘settling in’ plan is given at the first visit and the reasons are explained.
* If the parent feels that this will be difficult – perhaps another close relative can come in instead.
* Genuine difficulties need to be handled sensitively, but generally speaking this is not an issue where the parent has a choice not to attend with their child. A parent who refuses to take part in settling in may have the offer of the place withdrawn.