


<b>Services covered by this policy:</b>	General Pre-school Children's Service The Hamlet at Home
<b>Post holder(s) responsible for this policy:</b>	Senior Children's Service Manager Preschool Manager
<b>Date approved:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2024
<b>Approved by:</b>	Senior Manager Children's Service -Jayne Buckingham
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>To be reviewed:</b>	2 Yearly

## A. Policy statement

Our belief is that everyone at The Hamlet should be happy and safe, is unique and valued, can explore choice and opportunities, is encouraged to unlock their potential, can communicate in their own way and is part of the wider community.

At The Hamlet, we believe that children and young people settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents/carers well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff, and the preschool by providing secure relationships in which children thrive and parents/carers have confidence.

## B. Purpose of this policy and why we have it.

At The Hamlet we want children to feel safe, stimulated, and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with our staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their child's well-being and their role as active partners within the service.

We aim to make our 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.

Our staff work hard to ensure that the centre is a happy and dedicated place to attend and work in.

We recognise every child's individual efforts and achievements and believe that relationships between adults and children are critical for the child's happiness and security.

The Hamlet places the child's needs at the centre of the approach but also recognises the entitlements and expectations for others involved e.g. the families, key staff, and managers.

The key person role is set out in the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each child attending our preschool must have a keyperson.

This policy sets out the model for our key person approach that promotes effective and positive relationships for children.

### **C. Scope of this policy**

- The Hamlet Users
- Parents/carers/home support staff of Hamlet Users
- The Hamlet staff.
- The Hamlet Volunteers
- Educational or work placements e.g., Occupational Therapy or Nursing
- Visitors

### **D. Policy**

#### **Key Person Responsibilities**

The keyperson is responsible for:

- Forming strong bonds with their key children to allow them to identify and support their individual needs.
- Forming professional relationships with the families of their key children to enable effective communication and an open and honest exchange of information.
- Supporting families in any way they can, whether this be through direct support or by signposting to appropriate agencies and organisations, or through referrals and multi-agency working.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the care, learning and development needs of their key children and ensure that this is actively shared with the rest of the team within the room to enable all members of staff to respond appropriately to existing and emerging needs.
- Providing feedback to parents about their child's care and development and provide professional advice and guidance as needed or direct to the Preschool Manager for advice.
- Carrying out baseline assessments and collating observations to ensure that children's learning journals are up to date.
- Monitoring children's learning journals, assessing against expected stages of development, monitoring progress and being proactive in addressing and raising any concerns to ensure early intervention.
- Liaising with parents/carers in relation to their child's learning and development and carry out parent consultations to discuss observations regularly.

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- Working with other professionals and agencies to ensure that every child has the opportunity for the best possible start in life under the guidance of the SENCo Preschool Manager.
- Supporting children and their families through all transitions they experience and ensure that wherever possible these are planned with the child's needs in mind.
- Acting as an advocate for the child, both within and outside The Hamlet. This could include identifying where and how certain processes or procedures do not work for the child or giving the 'child's voice' when they are unable.
- Planning appropriate individual activities for the child prioritising their stage of development and next steps and ensuring it links with the child's current interests and characteristics of learning.
- Ensuring each child's stage of development, interests and characteristics of learning are included within the room and group planning.

As part of their role a key person is to assist the manager or SENCo to complete the following task:

- Work collaboratively with the team to plan the settling in sessions.
- During the settling-in sessions, explain the preschools procedures, room routine, and answer parents' questions and ensure that the child's initial assessment is fully completed with all the necessary information gained to enable the full level of care to be provided for the child.
- To complete baseline assessment with the parent(s) during the settling process
- Ensure that the parent is aware of what their child will need to bring to preschool with them. This is also included in the initial information pack.
- Ensure the child feels secure in the preschool environment and staff are able to respond to their needs,
- Ensure their key children's basic needs are met, i.e. supporting them feeding at mealtimes, changing their nappy and if unavailable ensuring that someone else is allocated to do this.
- Checking that daily feedback is recorded on Access and Tapestry accurately and in a timely manner.
- Ensuring that sufficient observations are made and recorded. The key person is not solely responsible for making or recording observations, as it is expected that all staff do so for all children, however the keyperson is expected to monitor this and inform the manager of any concerns.
- To ensure that individual activities are planned and carried out weekly and that another member of staff is allocated to carry them out in their absence.
- To communicate regularly with parents and inform the manager of any changes that they inform you of.
- To plan for transitions within in collaboration with parents and through liaison with the manager and new key person

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- To complete transition documentation following procedures as required
- To complete 2 year old checks
- To support the child and family when the child is leaving to start school or another setting.
- To follow up on any periods of absence.

### Co-Keyworker system

Due to staff absences and/or availability staff are not always available to speak to parents either at the beginning or the end of the day. To ensure that all parents receive the highest standards of care for their child, staff at The Hamlet work a 'Co-Key worker system'.

The Co-keyworker system is designed to ensure that continuity of care for all children, and parents, therefore staff must adhere to the following procedure.

- Staff must welcome their own, and Co-keyworker's children in a morning and ensure that all messages are passed on to the child's primary keyworker and manager.
- Staff must ensure that before they leave for the day their Co-keyworker is fully informed as to how their children have been and any messages for their parents have been handed over.
- Staff must greet the parents of theirs and their Co-keyworkers children of an evening and spend some time with them at the end of the session to inform them about their child's day.
- If a member of staff is off sick or on holiday the child's co-keyworker must ensure that they continue with their individual planning, and carry on working towards each child's individual development, along with ensuring their individual routines are followed.

## E. Procedures and monitoring

### Choosing a key person

A staff member will be chosen to be keyworker for each child by the Preschool Manager on admission to the Preschool based on the needs of the child and the skills of the staff member. This person will be the initial contact for the family and child during settling in. We acknowledge that most children will choose their own keyperson once they are settled into the service. This can be by vocalising their preferred member of staff or the team observing their preference for a staff member. The team may also observe a staff members ability to connect with the child and consider family views as they may also seek advice from a particular member of staff. The Preschool manager will review the choice of keyworker with the family once they are settled within the service and decide whether a change is needed.

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**F. Regulations (Health and Social Care Act) and other legal references**

- Early Years Foundation Stage ( Latest Version)
- Development Matters (Latest Version)

**This policy should be read in conjunction with any other relevant Hamlet policies and accompanying procedures.**

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