



It is the policy of The Close Day Nursery School to ensure that every child is happy and content during their time at nursery and that their parents/carers are confident that their child is getting the very best attention at all times.

During the many years of operation as a highly regarded nursery school many valuable experiences have been gained whilst settling children into the nursery and between the various rooms within the nursery as they prepare for the next steps in their lives. Many of the staff have not only gained much knowledge of this most important process but they have also had personal experience whilst settling their own children with others whether it be at a nursery or at school as they get older. This means that we have a vast wealth of knowledge that can be drawn upon to encourage both the child and their parent/carer to be confident during their stay.

When a parent/carer first approaches the nursery for a possible place they are encouraged to not only look at our website which has many details on how the nursery works, but to come along for a personally guided visit. There is no substitute for watching both children and teachers at work and play to get a feel for the warm and homely atmosphere that we try to achieve. We do like the child to accompany the parent/carer if possible so they too feel the atmosphere and we then get an insight as to how that child might react on their first days at nursery. We can see if they are interested in what is going on and chat with their parent/carer about any concerns they may have and about anything which could help in the settling process i.e. bringing in a comforter or special toy. We usually try to arrange this visit when lots of things are going on i.e. early on in the session when lots of practical work is being done and not during a more quiet time such as story time. This helps both child and parent/carer to see as much of what goes on as possible.

Settling in visits are also encouraged. For new children parents/carers are encouraged to accompany their child for a session and stay for as long as they want. This allows the child time to look and be interested in the things that are going on around them. Visits from one class to the next are also done several times before a child is due to move up and these are accompanied by their existing class teachers just to make sure that they are comfortable in their new surroundings.

A child who is tense or unhappy will not be able to play or learn properly, so it is important for parents/carers and staff to work together to help the child feel confident and secure in the group. This takes longer for some children and parents/carers should not feel worried if their child takes a while to settle. You must be prepared to accept that it may take some time for your child to adjust to the nursery but very few children fail to settle eventually.

### **Settling In**

We have several options open to us and before any are used they are discussed with parent/carer:

- Drop and Go. Parent brings child in and says goodbye and gives reassurance and leaves quickly. Often this works straight away and the child settles within minutes.
- Stay for a few minutes. A parent/carer may read a story or play a game and then after a few minutes leaves the child playing happily.
- Return earlier. A parent/carer may leave the child but return before the session ends. The length of time would be pre-arranged and contact can always be made with them usually via a mobile phone. If the parent is happy and so is the child it might be that the child is left until the end. It will all depend on how the session has gone.
- We can use a digital camera to take photos of the children as they are settling down and then we can show them to the parent/carer to prove that the child has indeed settled down and actually enjoyed themselves. This has been of great benefit especially if the child settles and plays happily but then cries when the parent/carer comes to collect them.

We will always try to find something which will interest the child i.e. get out special toys i.e. the train set or a certain dressing up outfit. We always have paint, chalks and drawing available, indeed anything that will help a child feel safe and happy. Outside the bikes are often a firm favourite and recently we have discovered that a bubble machine has kept even the most unsettled of children mesmerised at the shapes and colours and the fact that they can be popped and chased.

All in all we will do everything that we possibly can to make a child's stay a happy time and constant rapport with the parent/carer via our staff is vitally important in achieving this.

#### **Note**

As per the Guidelines for Parents, children must always be brought into the classroom prior to the parent/carers departure. They must not, under any circumstances be left unaccompanied on the playground. Responsibility for a child's safety cannot be held for a child that is left in such a manner especially at crossover times when gates are unlocked and there is a greater risk a child might leave the site on their own. Likewise when children leave at the end of their session parents / carers will be invited into the room to collect their child and leave the site.