



Helping your child to settle in...

When your child starts at Piddle Valley it is important to consider this transition and how we can work with you to help them settle in. We are a small, nurturing setting and pride ourselves in taking time to get to know all our families. Of course, this allows you and your child time to get to know us too!

When your family joins us this may be the first time your child has been away from you, or if they are used to being left with other people, they will be getting used to a larger group of people and a new environment. These new experiences coupled with your own feelings about going back to work, or leaving your child in a new place, can be a stressful time in a family's life. We hope to reduce any stress for everyone!

We always recommend that there is a two to four week settling-in period and follow you and your child's pace. This ensures that your child develops a secure, happy relationship with their Key Person. At all stages in our 'settling-in steps' we will ask you whether you feel confident that your child is ready to move to the next step. A sociable/extrovert child may be faster to settle in than a more cautious/shy child. So, we will always follow the child's lead, never rush them and ensure that they have a calm, happy and secure start with us. What better way to start their learning journey!

The number of sessions needed to settle in will of course vary from child to child, although all sessions last for 20 minutes. All children are unique and will all need individual settling-in plans. We do recommend two to three settling-in sessions per week and are always flexible around your child's routine. We often don't know how long your child will take to settle in until they are settled! Our 'settling-in steps' could be covered very quickly in two or three sessions by one child, whereby another child may need double that time. Examples of what settling-in plans could look like are:

	Fred	Wilma	Barney
Week 1	3 x 20 mins	2 x 20 mins	4 x 20 mins
Week 2	2 x 20 mins	2 x 20 mins	3 x 20 mins
Week 3	3 x 20 mins	settled start	2 x 20 mins
Week 4	settled start		settled start





Our 5 Settling-in Steps

Step 1

The parent introduces the child to their new friend (child's Key Person). Time is given for the child to explore the room. The parent plays alongside the child with the Key Person alongside (engaging in their own play). The Key Person plays alongside the child, introducing something to engage the interest of the child, such as bubbles or a puppet.

Step 2

The parent plays with the child with the Key Person alongside. The parent moves away slightly to pick something up without indicating to the child that they are going anywhere. E.g. tissue, handbag. The Key Person continues to play alongside the child, engaging the child with a toy of interest.

Step 3

The Key Person plays alongside the child and the parent sits alongside but reads a 'very important leaflet' or similar. The parent strolls to a different part of the room (but in view) frequently. E.g. to pick up another leaflet from the side. The Key Person continues to play alongside the child.

Step 4

The Key Person plays alongside the child and the parent sits alongside but reads a 'very important leaflet' or similar. The parent strolls out of sight briefly E.g. into the cupboard to get a leaflet /cup/sticker (or similar). Parent confidently tells child that they are going to do this and then goes for 1 minute's absence.

Step 5

As Step 4, but increase length of time that parent is out of the room from 2 minutes to 30 minutes. If the child wants to wait for their parent or is looking anxious, then we will say "Let's go to the door and wait for Mummy." This will create a familiar routine so that your child knows what to expect when they are dropped off.

During the settling-in period, say goodbye in a calm and brief manner, and tell your child when you'll be back. Your child might like to keep a favourite toy or cuddly with them to begin with as a transitional object.