Settling-In Policy (Montessori Infant Community)

We recognise that, for many children starting at the Montessori Infant Community, this may be the first time that they have been separated from their main carer.

Every child is unique and the amount of time that a child takes to settle into the Infant Community can vary enormously. Therefore, children will be given time to settle in at their own pace, so as to make them feel welcome, safe and confident in this environment.

Each child will be assigned a key person, whose role is to: help the children assigned to them to settle, oversee their progress and development and liaise with those children’s parents/carers. However, all staff will supervise children new to the nursery to ensure that they are happy in their new surroundings. The appropriate level of such supervision will be judged according to the child’s age and previous experiences but we recognise that some children may require 1:1 attention during the settling-in period and this will be given if needed.

Parents will be emailed an ‘Information on Entry’ form for completion immediately prior to their child’s entry to the Infant Community. The information contained within this form helps staff to get to know the likes/dislikes and needs of each individual child and therefore to enable them to respond to these during the settling-in period. Parents/carers and their child will also be invited to attend a 30-minute settling-in session immediately prior to their start date so that they can familiarise themselves with the nursery, meet the staff and ask any questions that they may have.

We recommend that parents/carers do say ‘goodbye’ to their child (even though this may risk a few temporary tears). Children become more distressed if they find that their parent/carer has just disappeared.

The Montessori Infant Community is an environment which children attend without their parents or carers and so it is our recommendation that parents/carers say ‘goodbye’ and leave their child from their first day. Children usually build up to staying for the entire morning over a period of a few sessions. To begin with, we ask parents/carers to drop off their child at 9.45am. This is so that the other children arrive before them and therefore their child is not upset by the constant opening and closing of the main door after their arrival.

If parents/carers are concerned that their child may not yet be ready to settle by him/herself then we would recommend that they speak to us prior to their child’s first day about the possibility of staying with their child for the first few sessions. Staff will be happy to advise on what might suit the parents/carers and child in question*.*

We will share short observations with parents through Transparent Classroom (the online platform that we use) after each of their child’s first few sessions so that they are able to see how they are settling in. This will be in addition to verbal feedback given when parents/carers collect their child.

If it seems that a child is taking a long time to settle in, this will be discussed with their parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Likewise, if a parent/carer feels that there is a problem during the settling-in period, they should raise this with a member of staff. If a child is very distressed, a member of staff will inform the parents/carers by telephone so that the child can be collected early.

Staff will always be available to discuss any concerns or other issues with parents/carers regarding their child and their attendance at the Infant Community. If a parent/carer wishes to discuss their child’s progress or any concerns at more length than is possible at the beginning or end of a session, they should email ic@montessoriclapham.co.uk to make an appointment.

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| **Policy reviewed:** | **Signed on behalf of the nursery:** | **Date for next review:** |
| April 2024 | Wendy Thompson | April 2025 |