DUCKS
KINDERGARTEN & INFANTS' SCHOOL

DUCKS KEY PERSON POLICY

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework states that every child must be assigned a key person.

At DUCKS, the commitment to meet each child's individual needs underpins all work with the children and the role of the key person is recognised throughout as being essential to each child's wellbeing.

In the Kindergarten all children are allocated a key person upon entry. In the Infants' School the key person is the class teacher, supported by the teaching assistant(s).

Organisation

In accordance with the EYFS statutory framework, providers must plan and organise their systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

The Role of the Key Person

The EYFS Statutory Framework states that the role of a key person is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents and/or carers. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

A key person is a named member of staff assigned to an individual child to support their development and act as the key point of contact with the child's parents or carers. This is their named member of staff with whom a child has more contact than other adults. The key person will meet the needs of each child and respond sensitively to their feelings, behaviour and ideas.

Implementation of the key person system at DUCKS

The key person is one area of practice within the theme of Positive Relationships within the EYFS statutory framework. The principle of this commitment is "Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships". Parents are informed of their child's key person before the start of every academic year or entry point if this is mid-year.

The allocation of a key person at DUCKS differs through the various stages of the EYFS.

In the Kindergarten, staff working in each of the rooms are allocated a group of key children and each of these staff are responsible for the settling in, observation and assessment of each child and

contributing to the individual planning as well as building up a strong bond between them, the Kindergarten and home i.e. with parents and or carers. The key person, alongside Room Leaders, is responsible for ensuring each child's Care Diary is completed daily. The key person in the Kindergarten will generally be the person who speaks to the parent at the start and end of the day, meets with the parent for parent consultation meetings and is the first point of contact for parents.

In the Infants' School, the key person is the class teacher. All the adults contribute to observing the children and the class teacher is responsible for maintaining assessment records.

The importance of a key person

A key person will enable their key children to become familiar with their new surroundings, to feel confident and safe within them, and develop a genuine bond with the child and their immediate family to enable the child to feel settled and form a close relationship. Through offering individual children comfort and reassurance when joining a new learning environment, a key person will enable their key children to develop relationships and support them in interacting with others thus promoting their confidence and supporting their wellbeing.

What does having a key person mean for children?

Throughout DUCKS, children are welcomed into an environment in which they are able to become increasingly familiar. However, by nature of being in a group setting, each child will come into contact with a large number of staff including teachers, early years practitioners and teaching assistants as well as the chef, housekeepers and specialist teachers. There are also times during the day when children will benefit from having the support of a named person, these times could be at the start and end of the day or lunch time.

As children get older, sustained individual attention is more difficult but also becomes less necessary for most children. Nevertheless, it is still important to ensure the teacher/key person principles continue to underpin practice. The crucial element is ensuring that the children are able to begin and end their day feeling emotionally supported. This helps to develop a sense of belonging and connection not only with the key person but with the other children too. At this age the role of the children in offering each other security, through friendships and in the sense of community of small groups, is increasingly important.

Settling In

<u>Kindergarten</u>

The Kindergarten has implemented a settling in process which provides both children and their parents with a smooth introduction to each of the rooms to help ensure that children have a sensitive and gentle start to their time at DUCKS.

Staff carefully plan a staggered entry for all children. In the Baby Room this process is discussed with the parent or carer in respect of the returning to work commitments parents may have and any specific needs for a particular family. In the Toddler and Duckling Room, staff also plan a staggered entry for all children to ensure that within the first two weeks of term only small groups of children are introduced to the room, the routines and their new learning environment. This ensures that the key person can spend time with a small number of their key children in those first weeks, to build a strong attachment and support at drop off and collection.

Infants' School

Pre-Reception and Reception children both have the opportunity to visit their new class for one afternoon in June. The Duckling Room children also have a number of visits to Pre-Reception, without their parents, during the Summer Term. They are also invited for a short session in their new class as part of moving up afternoon.

Where possible, the key person is available at drop off and collection to allow them to liaise with parents. On their first day, children who are new to DUCKS start slightly later in the morning than existing children, to give parents and practitioners time to talk if needed.

Procedure Owner:	Head of DUCKS
Last Reviewed:	March 2026
Date of Next Review:	Academic Year 2026-27