TRANSITIONS

At Little Holland Nursery we recognise that young children will experience many transitions in their early years; some of these planned and some unplanned. We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out the ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are:

* Starting nursery
* Moving between different rooms within the nursery
* Starting school or moving nurseries
* Family breakdowns
* New siblings
* Moving home
* Death of a family member or close friend
* Death of a family pet.

Staff are trained to observe their key children and to be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality. We respectfully ask that parents inform us of any changes in the home environment that may impact on their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child’s behaviour.

# STARTING NURSERY

We recognise that starting nursery may be difficult for some children and their families. Our nursery will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the nursery environment by:

* Allocating a key person to each child and his/her family, before he/she starts to attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child, ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. He/she offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with his/her parents during the settling in period and throughout his/her time at the nursery, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process
* Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child’s needs are supported
* Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the nursery
* Encouraging parents and children to visit the nursery during the weeks before an admission is planned and arranging home visits where applicable
* Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a one or two week period, dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development
* Welcoming parents to stay with their child during the first few weeks until the child feels settled and the parents feel comfortable about leaving their child. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents
* Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling in to the nursery and developing a plan with them
* Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences
* Assigning a buddy/back-up key person to each child in case the key person is not available. Parents will be made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment
* Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the nursery and reassure them of their child’s progress towards settling in
* Not taking a child on an outing from the nursery until he/she is completely settled.

# MOVING ROOMS PROCEDURE

When a child is ready to move to a different room in the nursery, we follow the process set out below and work with the parents to ensure this is a seamless process in which the child is fully supported at all stages. This may include a handover meeting between the existing key person, new key person and parents.

* The Nursery Manager will inform parents of an upcoming room move and the procedure that will be followed
* The child will spend short sessions in their new room prior to the permanent move to enable them to feel comfortable in their new surroundings
* Wherever possible, the child’s key person will go with the child on these initial visits to enable a familiar person to be present at all times
* Wherever possible groups of friends will be moved together to enable these friendships to be kept intact and support the children with the peers they know
* Parents will be kept informed of all visits and the outcomes of these sessions e.g. through discussions or Famly updates
* Only when the child has settled in through these taster sessions will the permanent room move take place. If a child requires more support this will be discussed between the key person, parent, manager and room leader of the new room to agree how and when this will happen.

# STARTING SCHOOL OR CHANGING NURSERY

Starting school is an important transition and some children may feel anxious or distressed. We will do all we can to facilitate a smooth move and minimise any potential stresses. This following process relates to children going to school. However wherever possible, we will adapt this process to support children moving to another childcare provider e.g. childminder or another nursery.

* We provide a variety of resources that relate to the school, e.g. uniform to dress up in, a role play area set up as a school classroom, photographs of all the schools the children may attend. This will help the children to become familiar with this new concept and will aid the transition
* We invite school representatives into the nursery to introduce them to the children
* Where possible we use other ways to support the transition to school, e.g. inviting previous children from the nursery who have moved on to school to come back and talk to the children about their school experiences
* We produce a comprehensive report on every child starting school to enable teachers to have a good understanding of every child received. This will include their interests, strengths and level of understanding and development in key areas. This will support continuity of care and early learning. This will be shared with the school with parents’ consent.

# FAMILY BREAKDOWNS

We recognise that when parents separate it can be a difficult situation for all concerned. In all such cases, we will work closely with the parents to ensure that all parents can be involved as partners with the nursery and are kept informed. We will also work with parents to determine the best way to support the child.

# MOVING HOME AND NEW SIBLINGS

We recognise that both these events may have an impact on a child. Normally, parents will have advance notice of these changes and we ask parents to let us know about these events so we can support the child to be prepared. The key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g. through role play, stories and discussions.