Key Person Policy

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Policy Statement
At The Orchard Nursery, we recognise the importance of secure attachments in early childhood. We adopt the Key Person Approach to ensure every child develops a close relationship with a familiar adult who understands and meets their individual needs, in line with the EYFS 2026.

What is a Key Person?
A Key Person is a named practitioner responsible for a particular child. The key person ensures that within the day to day demands of the setting, each child for whom they have a secure attachment and special responsibility feels individual, cherished and thought about by someone in particular while they are away from home.

Key Responsibilities

- Build a strong, trusting relationship with the child.
- Provide security, reassurance, and emotional support.
- Comfort, feed, change nappies, and settle the child to sleep where possible.
- Observe, assess, and plan learning and development using the EYFS framework and Orchard Goals using the eyLog system.
- Plan activities tailored to individual needs and interests.
- Develop professional partnerships with parents/carers, sharing progress and addressing concerns.
- Monitor welfare, including patterns of absence, injury, developmental concerns, child protection and refer where necessary.

Relationships with Children

- Support settling-in and familiarisation with the nursery.
- Respond sensitively to children's feelings, ideas, and behaviour.
- Provide a secure base, allowing children to explore safely and at their own pace.
- Maintain consistent care routines; if unavailable, a free member or buddy key person provides immediate support.

Relationships with Parents/Carers

- Maintain two-way communication to share significant family information affecting the child.
- Keep parents informed of development, assessments, and progress.
- Attend reviews or meetings for children with additional needs with support from senior staff / SENDCO.

Records

- Maintain observational records to inform next steps, in-the-moment planning, IEPs, and development reviews.
- For children supported by other staff (e.g., SEN), record keeping is joint responsibility.
- In cases of children with additional needs or identified children in need they may be called upon to attend reviews or and core group meetings or write a short report for the meeting with the support of a senior manager.

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Continuity and Cover

- If a Key Person is absent, a ‘buddy’ practitioner familiar with the child’s routines and preferences will provide care until the Key Person returns.

Daily Practice

- Flexible routines responsive to individual needs, particularly for children under two.
- Intimate care provided by familiar staff at regular intervals (every 2–3 hours or as needed).
- Babies and young children are cared for by familiar staff when waking, feeding, or being comforted.

Management and Oversight

- All practitioners, including apprentices and room leaders, share Key Person responsibilities.
- Room Leaders, Deputy Manager, and Nursery Manager oversee implementation and monitor records and communication via eyLog.

Transitions and Change Management

- Gradual handover and settling in ensures continuity if a Key Person leaves or changes rooms.
- Open communication with parents minimises disruption.

Signed on behalf of the nursery……*Emma Middleton*.....Date:… August 2026