

Settling –In Policy

Tir na nOg's Settling-In Policy is as follows: We are committed to the smooth transition of the children and the parents/guardians into the preschool. Settling-in should be a positive experience as it will influence children's self-confidence, attitude to relationships and socialising and will lay the foundation for life long learning.

Pre-Admission:

- We will provide all relevant written information to the parents/guardians on initial enquiry.
- A completed Registration form, with all the relevant details about the child, especially contact and collection information, must be returned to the preschool.
- We encourage parentsguardians to bring the child on short visits to the preschool during the weeks prior to them starting in order for the child to become familiar with the other children, the staff, the environment and the routine that is in place. If a child is starting in September we ask that the child come to the preschool for visits during the month of June, before we close for the summer holidays.
- A meeting is arranged with the parents/guardians to discuss issues and concerns around the process of settling-in.
- We ask parents/guardians to leave themselves available during the first few days that their child is in the preschool in order to facilitate the settling-in process.
- All new children do not start on the same day in September and this allows us to ensure that each child receives the time and attention they need on their first day.

First Day:

- The child and their parent/guardian are welcomed into the preschool together by one of the childcare assistants who introduces herself to the child.
- The child is shown around the premises and coat hangers, bag storage area and toilets are indicated.
- The parent/guardian is encouraged to stay with the child for as long as is required by the child. Some children settle in very quickly and allow the parent/guardian to leave very soon. Other children take a lot longer to settle in and are not ready to do a full session on the first day. It is better to do a few short days and allow the child to settle in at their own pace.
- We encourage the parent/guardian to interact with the other children and staff in the preschool as this reassures the child that they are in a safe place.
- We don't put any pressure on the child to get involved in any of the activities that are going on in the preschool. We allow the child to do whatever activity they want to do, and if they want to eat their lunch at a time other than lunch time this is OK.
- We ask the parent/guardian to collect the child promptly at going home time if the child has stayed on their own the first day.

Following Days:

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to extend the separation periods at the child's pace.

Parents/guardians must never leave the premises without saying goodbye to their child.

- When the parent/guardian has said goodbye to the child a childcare assistant will distract the child while the parent/guardian is leaving the premises. Extended goodbyes can be very distressful for the child so it is much better for the parent to leave quickly when they have said goodbye.
- Settling-in takes different lengths of time for different children and we allow each child as long as they need to settle-in.
- Gradually we encourage the child to take part in the different activities that are going on in the preschool and gently help them to find their feet.
- We keep the parents/guardians fully informed as to how their child is getting on.
- If a child gets very upset when the parent leaves and is getting into a state of distress we will also call the parent/guardian and ask them to return to the preschool.
- If, after a couple of weeks a child is still very distressed and not settling-in, and is still quite young we will discuss with the parents/guardians the possibility of deferring the child starting in the preschool for awhile.