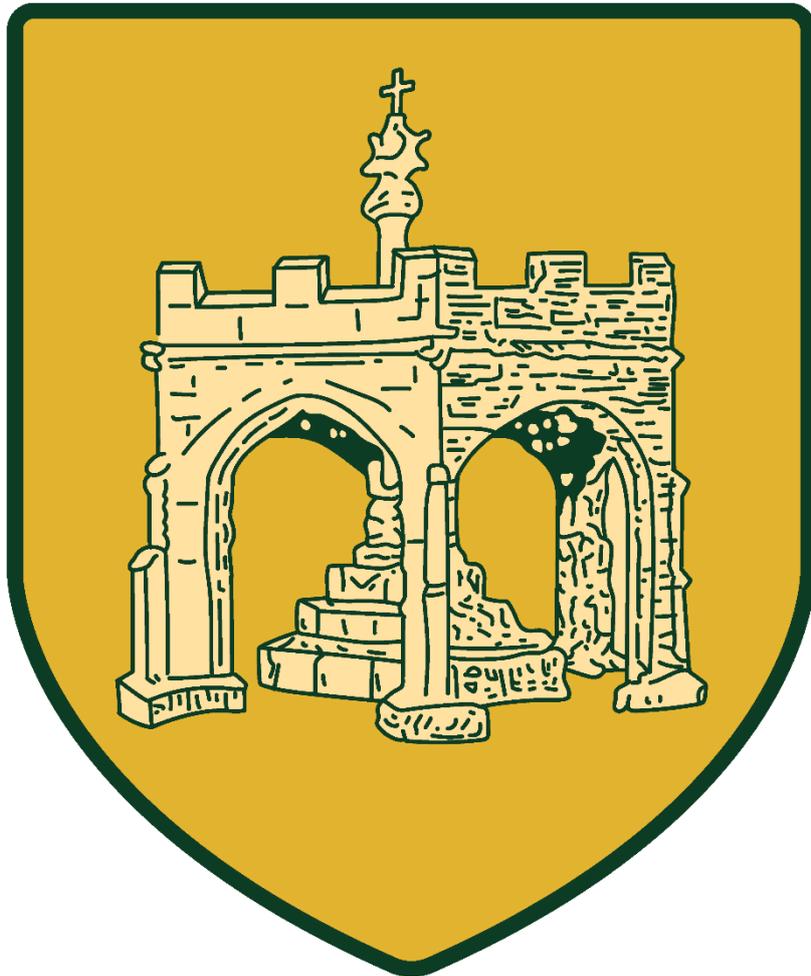




# Cheddar First Preschool

Where Every Child Is at the Heart

## Settling-In Policy



<b>Date Agreed</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Review Date</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2027

## Policy Statement

At Cheddar First Preschool, we aim to make the setting a welcoming, safe, and stimulating environment where children settle quickly and confidently. We recognise that each child is unique and that the wellbeing of the child and partnership with parents is central to a positive settling experience.

## Aims

- Support children to settle with confidence, independence, and security.
- Ensure children feel safe, happy, and stimulated in the setting.
- Build strong relationships between children and their key person.
- Reassure parents that their child's individual needs are prioritised.

## Implementation

### Pre-Start Preparation

- Provide parents with written information, including:
  - Prospectus and policies
  - Website links
  - Displays about activities
  - Information days, evenings, and individual meetings
- Offer visits during the half-term before enrolment for child and parent to familiarise with the setting.
- Allocate a key person before the child starts to welcome and support them.

### First Sessions

- "All About Me" forms completed with parents to gather child-specific information.
- Settling-in process discussed and agreed with parents to tailor strategies to the child's needs.
- Strategies may include:
  - Comfort objects
  - Favourite story or activity
  - Gradual introduction to routines and peers

### Parental Involvement

- Parents say goodbye clearly and reassure the child that they will return.
- Parents are kept updated on their child's settling progress.
- Flexibility from parents is expected until the child is fully settled.

### Supporting Children

- Younger children or children new to spending time away from home may need longer settling-in periods.
- Children returning after absence may need additional reassurance.
- Staff work in partnership with parents to address separation anxiety or distress.

- Children’s distress is not ignored or prolonged; staff contact parents if settling is not progressing despite support.
- The right is reserved not to accept a child without a parent present if leaving them causes significant distress.

### **Indicators of Being Settled**

A child is considered settled when:

- They have formed a relationship with their key person.
- They look for their key person for comfort and respond positively.
- They are familiar with the setting and engage in activities.
- They are comfortable interacting with peers.

### **Impact**

- Gradual introduction to the setting, staff, routines, and activities makes the transition positive for children and parents.
- Successful trusting relationships with key persons and staff enable children to become confident learners.
- Promotes emotional security and wellbeing, supporting learning and development.

This policy should be read alongside the Managing Separation Anxiety in Children Under 2 Years Old Policy.

This policy is reviewed annually and updated in line with current legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice.