

Separates calmly from parent/carer

Transitions between home and the setting provide valuable opportunities for practitioners and parents to work together. Building positive relationships with families helps children feel safe, secure, and welcomed into the setting. Children are more likely to settle successfully when they experience consistent, nurturing relationships and develop a sense of belonging. Supporting children's emotional wellbeing by recognising and responding sensitively to their feelings helps them manage separation from parents and carers with increasing confidence.

Practitioners can support children by:

If the child is new to the setting:

- Working closely in partnership with parents and carers.
- Gathering information about the child's routines, interests, comforters, and previous experiences of separation.
- Ensuring the settling-in process is flexible and responsive to the child's individual needs.
- Offering opportunities for the child and family to visit the setting before starting, where possible.

For all children:

- Using visual routines to help children understand the daily timetable and when their parent or carer will return.
- Knowing and sharing who will be collecting the child at the end of the day.
- Keeping the child's 'All About Me' profile up to date and using this information to support engagement and emotional security.
- Providing consistent staffing to help children build secure relationships and a sense of stability.
- Creating warm, predictable routines that help children feel safe and confident.
- Talking regularly with parents to understand any changes or challenges that may be affecting the child's emotional wellbeing or ability to separate.

Activities, ideas, resources and strategies:

If the child is new to the setting:

- Offer settling-in sessions to help the child become familiar with the environment, routines, and staff.

For all children:

- Provide transition visits when moving between rooms within the setting
- Use a visual timetable to show the child what will happen during the day and when they will go home. For some children, a simple 'first, then' approach may be more effective
- Encourage the use of a transitional object from home, such as a favourite toy, photograph, or comfort item
- Show the child a photograph of the person who will be collecting them to support predictability and reassurance
- Have a motivating activity available when the child arrives to encourage engagement and a positive start to the session
- Acknowledge and validate the child's feelings, reassuring them that their parent or carer will return at the end of the session or after a specific activity, using the visual timetable for support

For children who speak more than one language, work in partnership with parents to learn and use key words and phrases from the child's home language. This can help the child feel valued, understood, and secure within the setting.