

Ruskin House School

Settling in Guidance for Parents

In our experience at Ruskin House School (RHS) settling in takes about two weeks; it will vary greatly from one child to another. You will be able to see how we: - Play with children - Talk with them - Have fun together - Set boundaries for children –

Deal with difficult behaviour. You are always welcome to ask about how we work and how we deal with situations.

At RHS the settling in period is not charged for.

Our aim is to settle children in at their own pace – when children are ready to move away from their parents, we will encourage and support this.

We have found that in the long run, this means more settled and happier children – and parents! The process often goes like this:

1. Your child spending time in the Nursery with you. During this time, you are available to support your child, to ease the transition for your child from home to Nursery, and to help staff get to know your child. At this stage it might be best to be available to your child but not too interesting! In other words, it might be best to avoid getting deeply involved in your child's play at this time.
2. This allows members of staff to make a judgement about engaging your child in experiences. However, you are the parent and we will support you in judging how to handle this for the best. We are aware that both you and your child may be feeling stress at some points, and your child may not appear to be on "best behaviour". Please don't worry about this – it is all part of the process. As adults, if we try to relax as much as possible and remain confident, this will help the children.
3. Your child spending time in the Nursery whilst you are in another part of the building. It will be up to you and the Key person to discuss when your child is ready for this step. This means that your child has the opportunity to explore the nursery and have her or his needs met by the Key person and the rest of the staff. This might be for quite a short period of time at first, and then for longer stretches of time. It is very important that you say clearly to your child that you will be leaving the nursery room. It's tempting to nip out when your child is busy, but if your child turns round a few minutes later to find you have

unexpectedly gone, she or he may be distraught. It is essential that you do not leave the building without talking with your key person first.

4. Finally, it is for you to judge – with the support of the Key person – when your child is ready to be left in the Nursery with the staff. Your child might be very sad at the moment of parting, but if the settling in process has gone well she or he will be able to manage this with the support of the key person and other members of staff. If your child continues to be upset after you have gone, please be reassured that we would contact you and would not put your child through an ordeal.
5. It is still important for you to say goodbye to your child clearly, so that your child knows what is going on and can express how he or she feels about it. Some parents find it easiest to set a limit on how long they will stay at dropping-off time, for example “I’ll read two books with you and then it will be time for me to go.” It is up to you how you manage this, but please do ask for support or advice if it will be helpful. It is not uncommon for a child to settle very well into the nursery, and then unexpectedly a few weeks later to find it difficult to come in. This might be for any one of a variety of reasons, and again we will offer our support or help if you would like it.
6. At any stage of the process – if you would like to talk to someone, or need ideas, or support, or help ... then please talk to your key person, or the Manager. It is best to arrange to do this in a private space – not in front of your child. As a staff, we are committed to working closely and supportively with parents and carers.

What will happen in the settling-in period? All children are different. We have given a rough guide below to the stages most children go through when settling-in. Some children need to go through all the stages, some can skip few. This depends on the age and the circumstance (e.g.: first time in a nursery, older siblings...)

Stage 1

Parent/carer and child spend an hour together in the nursery (10-11am)

Stage 2

Parent/carer and child spend an hour and a half in the nursery. If appropriate, the child will spend 20 minutes in the nursery without the parent/carer. Parent/carer needs to stay in the building (e.g. in the parents’ room).

Stage 3

Child builds up to 1 - 2 hours in the nursery or close by without the parent/carer.

Stage 4

Child spends 2-3 hours in the nursery without parent/carer.

Stage 5

Child comes to nursery at 10am and stays for lunch. Parent/carer picks child up at 12.30pm

Stage 6

Child comes to nursery at 10am, stays for lunch and through to 2pm (time includes sleep period or afternoon play, as appropriate)

Stage 7

Child comes to nursery at 9am and stays until 3.30pm

Stage 8

Child spends full session in nursery, from early morning to late afternoon.