

Settling in Policy

Version History

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description of Changes
Original	Feb 19		
2025/1	September 25	Board of Management	Added onto new template and annual review
2026/1	September 26	Board of Management	Yearly review and updates

Policy Owner

Head of Children and Young People

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline how YMCA East Surrey staff ensures that all children and young people feel safe, secure and comfortable with staff in settings. Staff provide a welcoming environment where children and young people settle quickly and where consideration is given to the child and young people's individual needs and the parents/carers wishes.

Definitions

Relevant Legislation or Governance Requirements

- ▶ Working together to Safeguard Children 2026

Related Policies and Procedures

- ▶ Safeguarding Children Policy
- ▶ Admissions Policy
- ▶ Role of a Key worker Policy (Pre School)

Policy Requirements

Prior to first attendance at a YMCA Children & Young People setting, parents/carers are provided with information through the website and leaflets. Appropriate registration details and care plans are also completed by the parent/carer before a child / young person can attend any setting (see Admission policy). These provide the staff teams with additional information regarding the child and young people's needs and interests. Children & Young People staff teams will ensure that all information regarding first attending a setting is relayed to the children and young people in ways suitable for them as an individual, always considering their age and stage of development.

Visits to settings

Parents/carers and children / young people can visit before the child starts at an agreed time, which provides them with an opportunity to see the setting, meet the staff and the other children / young people in attendance. Home visits can be arranged with the approval of the Head of Children & Young People, who will decide if this is an appropriate

course of action, which will then be carried out by the relevant setting Coordinator or Manager.

In addition to the above, YMCA East Surrey's Pre-schools will employ a settling in process, which will be:

- ▶ Visit one: parent stays with child for 1 hour
- ▶ Visit two: child stays for 2 hours on their own, however it can be adjusted depending on the individual child's needs

Settling in

The scheme Manager / Coordinator / Leader will where appropriate work together with the parents/carers to create a bespoke settling in process for the child / young person. For preschools a key person will be assigned to the child in line with 'Role of a Keyworker' policy

The YMCA's expectation of the parents/carers during the settling in process is to prepare the child / young person as best they can, to offer encouragements and be prepared to stay for a while, if this is appropriate. Appropriate level of support and supervision will be judged according to the child or young person's age, maturity and previous experiences.

Parents/carers can discuss staying for part or all the session in the first week, if it is in their child/ young person's best interest. Setting Managers /Coordinators/Leaders will explain and reassure parents/carers that younger children may take longer to settle. Parents/carers are welcome to say goodbye straight away or to stay and settle their child / young person at an activity before leaving them, whatever method is best for their individual child / young person. Setting Managers / Coordinators and leaders may also have to consider the effect on other children / young people within the setting and any impacts this may have on settling in process will be discussed with parents / carers.

If a child / young person is distressed, we will offer shorter sessions or enable parents/carers to stay for part of the session. We will presume a child / young person has settled when they independently enter the setting and appear comfortable in that setting, with little or no support from parent/carers.

If it seems that a child or young person is taking a long time to settle in, this will be discussed with their parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Likewise, if the parent/carers feel that there is a problem during the settling in period, they should raise this with the key person or setting Coordinator/Manager any time they wish.

Roles and Responsibilities

Monitor:	Head of Children & Young People
Approve:	Board of Management
Endorse:	Children & Young People Advisory Group
Propose:	CEO
Draft and review:	CYP Childcare and Children's Activity Manager

Implementation and review

This Policy is reviewed annually and disseminated to staff on HealthboxHR and SharePoint.