

The Keyworker

When children are in an early years setting it is important for them to have someone they can interact with, children can get very upset when they leave their parents/carers for the first few times they go to the nursery so it's important for the child to have someone they can go to if they are feeling upset when they are not with their parents. A keyworker can provide the child with the love and support they need when they are in the setting.

A keyworker in a private day and primary school setting will work with the child to help and encourage them to try different things, they will also work with the parents/carers to ensure the child's care and educational needs are being met. The keyworker's job is to make sure the child is happy and they feel safe in the setting, the keyworker will also watch the child and help the child's learning experiences.

P6- Explain why the key person approach is used in early years settings.

In early years setting there is a legal statutory requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage for every child in the setting has to be assigned a keyworker to help them to get used to nursery. Children need to have some help from an adult in every setting otherwise they will not fully understand that it's ok to have some help from the adults in the different early year's settings.

Main duties of a keyworker

Once the keyworker is in the nursery with the child they need to make sure the emotional needs of their child are being met by comforting the child if they become upset with something in the setting or at home. The care of the child and their needs have to be met by the keyworker in the setting so that the child will feel safe and they belong in there. The key worker when working with a certain child needs to make sure that they have taken into account the child's race, culture, religion and family values **and if they have any additional needs they are taken into account in a primary school setting.**

It's important that the parents/carers also have a strong relationship with the keyworker because it was the parents who took the children to that setting so it's important the staff tell them how the child is coping in the setting, the keyworkers also have the relationship with the parents **in the setting of a nursery**, so that the parents can tell the keyworker what the child's needs are. The parents/carers will also have to give the keyworker permission to

keep records of the child which the keyworker will give to the parents at the end of the academic year or when they are required.

When it comes to the child the keyworker is working with it is important that if necessary they will have to liaise with the parents of the child if they have any worries about the child in any of the child's areas. When the keyworker has worked with the child they normally work with they should always contact the parent even if there is no problem with the child the parent should always be informed about their child by the keyworker. If the child has come into the setting and they are upset about a certain thing either at home or in school the keyworker should be able to talk to the child and whatever the child says the keyworker should keep it confidentially. **One of the ways the keyworker helps to support the child in the setting by helping them to development in their intellectual skills by helping them with their work if they need it.**

P7- Describe how the key persons approach supports all areas of children development.

According to Tassoni P (2013, pg 94) "As the key person will spend time with the child and know them well, they will also have a role in the observation of their development."

Physical Development

The way the key worker supports with the child's physical development is by planning activities to help the child to develop with their fine and gross motor development. The child will want to play in the activities because **they will want the keyworker to join in with them.**

Language/ Intellectual Development

When the child is in the setting they are learning new skills and by the key worker talking to them and taking in to account how the child works and what the best they work is. The keyworker, because they are with the child is with the child all the time they will know what the best way is to communicate with the child is. **An example of the key worker spending time with the child to develop their language skills is by reading a book to the child and also letting them read it as well.**

Emotional/Social Development

When the child is happy with the person they are working with they are more likely to develop, this is way it is important for the child to have a key person from a young age. When the key worker is always with the child, the child will start to feel relaxed with the keyworker and feel nurtured. **An example of this is the keyworker could work with the child so they feel more comfortable.**

M4 - Explain how the key person approach supports children's development, using appropriate examples.

D4 - Evaluate the contribution of the key person approach to a selected child's development

Case study 1 – birth to two years – Childminder

Jessica is 11 months old and she is due to start attending a local childminder in a month. Jessica's keyworker is the childminder and in order to make Jessica's transition effective her keyworker is providing settling in sessions with her mum. The first session is an initial meeting between mum, Jessica and the keyworker to discuss Jessica's routine. The keyworker wants to know how many bottles she has a day, what her food preferences are, any allergies, how often she needs a sleep and how she likes to go to sleep. Jessica's mum did point out that Jessica was lactose intolerant. The keyworker also wanted to know if she had a comforter for when she gets upset, what activities she like to be involved in, her favourite story book and her favourite cartoon character. After the initial meeting Jessica visited and played with the other children for two hours, then for an afternoon with her mum but then for a morning on her own to enable her to become more confident away from her mum. The childminder believed it was very important to spend time in the morning and in the evening talking to mum about how Jessica was settling in and if mum had any concerns. Mum did mention that she was concerned that Jessica didn't show any interest in wanting to walk as she wasn't pulling herself up onto furniture. The childminder decided to observe Jessica over the next week and then plan some activities to encourage Jessica's physical development.

The first way the keyworker supports the Jessica's development is they provide Jessica with some settling sessions with her and her mum to make sure Jessica's transition is smooth. The first area of development this affects is Jessica's emotional development because she will feel more comfortable because she will know the child-minder. Another area it helps with is Jessica's social development because when she's in the session she's with her mum which will make her feel secure in the sessions, **also developing relationships with other children.**

According to Tassnoi, P (page 93) "Settling in can take some time, as children will get to know their key person and the setting."

The positive of the settling sessions is Jessica will get to know the child-minder and get used to the setting. Another positive is after a few sessions Jessica will start to trust the child-minder to look after her. **The impact on Jessica if she didn't have these sessions she will not have the confidence and will not be able to get to know the keyworker or the other children.**

Another way the key worker supports Jessica in the setting to help with her intellectual development is by the key worker discussing Jessica's routine with her mum so she is aware of what is going to be going on **which will help Jessica to feel safe in the setting.** One of the

developmental areas this helps Jessica with is her social development because while she is in the routine, Jessica will be meeting new babies in the setting which means she will be more happier when meeting other children as she starts to grow up.

According to Tassnoi, P (page 92) “Parents should tell the key person about their child’s likes and dislikes and about routines the child is used to.”

The positive of the routine is Jessica will start to understand how things work in the setting and she will begin to feel better when she is around all the other children in the setting because she will know what’s going on. **If the key person didn’t know the child’s routine then they might get the important things like her bottle wrong which is part of Jessica’s care needs.**

The key worker in this setting spends time during the day talking to Jessica’s mum about Jessica. One of the areas of development it helps Jessica to develop is her physical skills because if the keyworker needs to know something about Jessica for example how she likes her bottle the keyworker will know because she has taken the time to talk to Jessica’s mum about her and what her needs are. Another area this helps with is her intellectual development because when the key worker talks to Jessica’s mum she will be able to tell her what stage of development Jessica is at. **An example of this is Jessica’s mum will be able to see what stage of development Jessica is at and she will notice when she at home.**

The positive of the key worker talking to Jessica’s mum on a regular basis is the keyworker will be able to find out **what** to best to look after Jessica is and how to do some of her regular things **like her sleeping pattern** for her.

The keyworker puts in place some activities to help Jessica’s development. One area of development it helps Jessica with is her physical develop because when she is doing the activities it will help develop her fine and also her gross motor skills. The activities will also help her to develop in her intellectual development because when she is doing the activities she will be learning new skills while she is playing.

The positive of the activities is she will learn new skills and also when she is in setting she will want to try new activities when she is given different activities to do. **Another positive is Jessica will also be with other children in the activities which will help her to do the activites.**

Case study 2 – Two years – five years – Private Day Nursery

Jake is three years old and has just moved to the area and is starting at the local private day nursery when his mum starts her new job. As Jake has attended a nursery since he was 6 months his mum has been able to bring his Learning Journey that details his achievements and interests during the time he spent in his previous setting and shows his learning and development through carefully

chosen, dated and observations. Jake's keyworker takes his profile home to look through how he is progressing in the prime and specific areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Jake's keyworker put in place a settling in programme for Jake that consisted of mornings for one week, then afternoons for one week and then full days to ensure a smooth transition. During the settling in period Jake's mum met with his keyworker to discuss his needs and interests. His mum mentioned that he is still in nappies and he is not interested in going to the toilet and when she has tried to encourage him to use the toilet he has accidents. Jake's keyworker suggested that she buys him some training pants and produce a reward chart for home and she would do one for nursery. The keyworker was confident that with the positive encouragement from home and nursery he would become dry very quickly. Jake's mum also said that he was very shy and didn't mix well with other children. His keyworker decided to plan some activities with other children that like the same toys and cartoons as he did, to allow him to feel more secure in his environment. His keyworker ensured that she spoke to his mum daily about the strategies she has put in place to ensure all his needs were met.

The keyworker uses a home profile for Jake to see how his development is going in some of the areas of development. The profile helps Jake's intellectual development because when the keyworker checks Jake's profile she will be able to check if he is at the right stage of development, and she will also be able to make sure that when he is in class she can check he is learning to the best of his ability. Another developmental area it helps with is Jake's language development because as the keyworker is looking after Jake they will be able to help him to learn the words he needs for him to be at the right stage of language development.

According to Tassnoi, P (page 93) "By working well with parents, the key person can find out all they need to know about the child's physical and care needs."

The positive of the keyworker using a profile for Jake is they will be able to let Jake's mum know how Jake is progressing in his development once he is in the setting. Another positive is Jake's keyworker will be able to see what the best way Jake works is.

Jake's keyworker put in place a settling in programme for Jake that consisted of mornings for one week, then afternoons for one week and then full days to ensure a smooth transition. One of the developmental areas the programme helps Jake with is his emotional development because when he is in the programme he will start to feel safe and will start to understand how things are going to work in the setting. Jake's physical will be improved with the programme because the keyworker will be able to see how Jake develops and try and find the best way to help him develop.

The positive of the settling in programme is Jake will be able to understand how the day is going to be run, **he will also get used to what he does every day** which means he will be more relaxed once he goes in to Private Day Nursery.

The keyworker and Jake's mum during a settling period discuss Jake's needs and interests, the first way it will be able to help with Jake's development is by physically, the keyworker

will know what is the best way for Jake to learn is and how he likes to work. Another way it will help with Jake's development is when the keyworker is talking to Jake's mum about what is interest are the keyworker will be able to tell him and his mum about other children who have the same interest as him **which will develop his social development.**

The positive of the keyworker knowing what Jake's interests are is the keyworker will be able to plan an activity in the setting which will get Jake involved and help with his development.

The last way the keyworker helps Jake with his development is by she ensures that she has spoken to his mum about the strategies she has put in place to ensure all his needs are met. One way it will help with Jake's development is emotionally Jake will feel happier in the setting because he will be aware of the fact his keyworker as spoken to his mum. Another way it will help with Jake's social development is because he will be with his mum which will be able to reassure him.

Case study 3 –five years – 8 years Primary School

Antonia is 7 years old and has recently moved to the local primary school from Poland. She has limited English and as a result she is very apprehensive about coming into school. Antonia and her parents have been for a welcome visit around the school and met with the teaching assistant who will be her keyworker. The teaching assistant wanted to know Antonia's interests and if she had any hobbies, as she thought this would be a way to gain her trust and try to introduce some English words to her. The keyworker then displayed Polish words with the English meaning throughout the different areas in the classroom to support her and the other children in understanding her environment. The keyworker thought that a way to make Antonia feel welcome was for the class to have a Polish day with traditional food, dress and music. The keyworker ensured that throughout the National Curriculum subjects she provided Polish and English words and she also ensured that the parents were given this for homework as this would encourage the parents development of the different language. The keyworker had weekly meetings with her parents to discuss Antonia's progress and if they had any concerns about her progress in school.

The first way the keyworker helps to support Antonia's when she moved to the school is they have a welcome visit for her and her mum so they can see the school and have a look around. The way its help with Antonia's emotional development is she will have more confidence and will be more settled in with the teacher and the class. Another area it helps with is Antonia's social development because she will be able to meet new people before she starts school.

The positive of this is not only will Antonia feel better and more safe her mum will be able to see what the school are doing for her and how they are making her feel like one of them. **Antonia will also feel like she is part of the school because they have taken the time to help her in the setting.**

The school also displayed Polish words with the English meaning throughout the different areas in the classroom to support her and the other children in understanding her environment. One area this helps her to develop is her language development because as she is reading the polish words she will also be learning the English meaning which means her language development will improve.

The polish words also help her with emotional development because she will have more confidence to talk to new people.

The positive of this is she will be learning new words in polish and also she will learn what the words are in English. Another positive is the other children in the class will understand what she is saying because they have to words.

One of the ways the key worker helps Antonia to feel welcome and part of the setting is by having a polish day. One of the key areas it helps Antonia to develop is her emotional development because she will begin to feel more secure in the setting because she will see that everyone in the setting understands her. Another area it will help with is her social development because as she is taking part in the day she will be able to meet new people and she will able to meet other people who are also polish which will make her feel confident once in the setting.

The positive the polish day for Antonia is she will be able to see that everyone in the setting with her understand her and also the children are also learning about Antonia and her language.