

2.4 Key Person

A key person has **special responsibilities** for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel **safe** and cared for and building relationships with their parents.



Secure attachment

- A key person helps the baby or child to become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it.
- A key person develops a genuine bond with children and offers a settled, close relationship.
- When children feel happy and secure in this way they are confident to explore and to try out new things.
- Even when children are older and can hold special people in mind for longer there is still a need for them to have a key person to depend on in the setting, such as their teacher or a teaching assistant.

Shared care

- A key person meets the needs of each child in their care and responds sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- A key person talks to parents to make sure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.
- A close emotional relationship with a key person in the setting does not undermine children's ties with their own parents.
- Careful records of the child's development and progress are created and shared by parents, the child, the key person and other professionals as necessary.

Independence

- Babies and children become independent by being able to depend upon adults for reassurance and comfort.
- Children's independence is most obvious when they feel confident and self-assured, such as when they are in their own home with family, or with friends and familiar carers such as a key person.
- Babies and children are likely to be much less independent when they are in new situations, such as a new group or when they feel unwell or anxious.