

## Establishing children's starting points

When children start at the setting they arrive at different levels of learning and development. In order to help them to settle and make rapid progress it is important that they are provided with care and learning opportunities that are suited to their needs, interests and abilities. This means establishing and understanding their starting points and whether there are any obstacles to their learning, so that teaching can be tailored to the 'unique child'.

- The aim of establishing a child's starting points is to ensure that the most appropriate care and learning is provided from the outset.
- Starting points are established by gathering information from the first contact with the child's care-givers at induction and during the 'settling in' period. Staff do not 'wait and see' how the child is settling before they begin to gather information.
- Care-givers will be given an 'all about me' form as part of their child's application. This form will provide staff with routines and like and dislikes.
- Once a key person has been assigned they are responsible for establishing their key children's starting points by gathering information in the following ways:
  - observation of the child during settling in visits
  - discussion with the child's care-givers
  - building on information that has been gathered during registration by referring to the registration form

The information gathered is recorded within three weeks of the child's official start date.

- The key person must make a 'best fit' judgment about the age band the child is working in
- The key person should complete details by indicating where they have gathered their evidence from, using more than one source where possible i.e. parent comment and observation during settling in.

If the initial assessment raises any concerns that extra support may be required then staff will meet with care-givers and decide on the best support to put into place.

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