



## **Guidelines for Settling Children into Childcare**

### **Rationale:**

Kidiwise Preschool and Childcare is committed to the care and protection of the children attending our Centre and will endeavor to meet the needs of the parents/caregivers and whānau of any child that attends this service.

### **Purpose:**

To ensure a smooth transition for children coming to us from home or another Centre and to provide their parents with support and encouragement, so they will feel confident and reassured about their decision to place their child in our care.

### **Procedures:**

1. Parents/caregivers and whānau are encouraged to visit the Centre with their child at least twice before starting. This allows both parent and child to become familiar with the environment, staff and other children.
2. Phone or email contact during the day is encouraged by staff. We have found that frequent contact encourages parents to feel more confident and provides opportunities for the exchange of information and relationship building. Each room has a cellphone to allow for this.
3. In order for children to feel comfortable with the routines, culture and regular events at the Centre, we recommend that parents/caregivers and whānau say goodbye to their child when they are ready to leave the Centre. This helps to develop trust.
4. It is important that the emotional needs of the new child are nurtured, therefore special comforting toys/blankets are welcomed at Kidiwise.
5. We ask parents/caregivers/whānau to fill out an 'Individual Care Routine' form for teachers detailing routines at home, likes/dislikes, etc, to assist in getting to know a child and building relationships.
6. If the child is under the age of two a teacher will be allocated as a key teacher to settle them in and build a familiar relationship with them and their whānau. They will also be provided with a care book to strengthen communication between home and the Centre.

## **Practical Advice for Settling Children into Childcare:**

- Ensure that you talk to the staff about managing the entry process, so your child's individual settling needs can be accommodated, i.e.: a combination of shorter attendance times, the parent staying with the child for some initial sessions or staying for an hour then leaving for one, special toys, likes and dislikes and so on.
- Talk to your child about the Centre at home, an encouraging and positive approach works wonders and let's children know that there are experiences and activities to look forward to.
- The management of 'good-bye' needs to be given thought and discussed with Centre staff. Some children are content with saying goodbye, while other children may find the separation stressful and the process for these children requires planning and sensitivity. In any plan of action, it is important to tell your child when you are leaving, rather than sneaking away.
- Ensure you communicate with staff when you need support to leave and how you'd like to do it. Perhaps waving at the window, a cuddle from a teacher or redirection to get engaged in an activity is needed. Find what works for you and create a routine. Your child will soon learn that although you are leaving you will come back.
- Remember, if you are concerned, we are but a phone call away.
- Greet your child warmly when you pick them up from the Centre.
- Be on time, a few minutes can seem like a long time for a child who has been waiting for you.
- Show your appreciation for anything your child has to show you as it helps build your child's self-esteem.
- Be prepared for your child to be tired at the end of the day. Children will often present as grumpy or non-communicative and refrain from revealing information about their day. Give them time to unwind before you ask questions.
- Beginning childcare can be a time of mixed emotion, and parents and teachers need to allow for a child's period of adjustment. However, through good communication and planning, settling into the Centre will take place and attending childcare will become a fun and interesting routine in the life of both you and your child.

### **Links to Curriculum:**

**Belonging, Mana whenua:** *Children and their families feel a sense of belonging.*

*Children and their families experience an environment where: They know that they have a place; They feel comfortable with the routines, customs and regular events.*