



Settling Policy

Our aims:

- To work closely with you and your child introducing your family to Venture Outdoor Kindergarten's unique outdoor setting.
- To support you and your child in the transition from their current circumstances to becoming fully integrated at our outdoor kindergarten.
- To help your child make a strong attachment to their key person and other kindergarten staff who will be involved in your child's care.
- To help your child feel secure and confident at Venture Outdoor Kindergarten.
- To work with you to help your child with any difficulties that might arise.

Helping your child to settle in.

We would like to welcome you and your child to Venture Outdoor Kindergarten. We hope to build a strong relationship with your family and we will work hard to ensure that your child has a successful time at our Early Years setting. We look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Children will settle into a new setting in lots of different ways. We have worked with many different children and their families over many years and our staff are highly skilled at settling children. Please be reassured and try not to worry if your child experiences difficulties – it is a very normal part of a child's development to be anxious, nervous or even angry about starting somewhere new. We recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process too. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you.

Before your child starts at the kindergarten

- In addition to the vital information that we ask you to provide on the registration form, we will invite you to tell us more about your child in the 'About me' section on Tapestry. Please do provide us with this information, it can be extremely useful for us as it helps to bridge the gap between home and Kindergarten. It has previously proved an invaluable source of information to quickly reassure children.
- If you would like to speak to a member of staff on the telephone or in person prior to your child starting with us, please get in touch. This can be helpful in order to discuss together a plan for

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settling at a time when your child is not within earshot, so that we all know what to expect on the day. You may also have questions regarding the kindergarten's routines, policies and procedures. We will develop an individual settling-in plan for the child, which may be adapted by the kindergarten staff and parents during the settling-in process.

- Please also call a member of staff to discuss any medical or SEN issues, if there are any such issues we will ask you to complete a Healthcare Plan.
- We offer a settling visit prior to your child starting at the kindergarten. This is usually for an hour in the morning or afternoon when they can come with you for a play and to join in with the snack routine.
- We also offer a trial day where your child can join us for a day before they start officially. This is charged at our usual daily rate.

Our settling procedure

The aim is that parents will feel able to leave their child at the beginning of the day as soon into the term as possible. Every family is different and we will work with you to find the best way to settle your child so that this can happen when they join us at Venture.

Options:

You may choose to say a quick, confident and happy goodbye to your child, leaving them with a staff member whenever you feel ready to do so and as you see fit for you and your child. We are aware that for many families this is the better option and although there might be tears at first, we will remain in contact with you during the day if necessary and you will get lots of photographs and information from us at the end of the day. We will not gloss over any issues which arise and will give you detailed and accurate feedback.

For the first few sessions you may choose to stay with your child until snack time (usually at 10am). At snack time we ask you to either say a quick, confident and happy goodbye to your child, or you may choose to leave at this point with your child. If you wish to stay for longer you may remain on site until lunchtime (usually 12 pm).

If you do not feel that your child is ready to stay independently at snack time, you may choose to remain at the kindergarten with them for longer. From snack time onwards we will provide an observation area on the periphery of the children's activities where a parent who wishes to do this will sit. During this time your child is free to sit with you and observe the kindergarten or to join in with snack time and play whilst you observe them. It is important that you try not to interact with the other children, or your child unless they come to you. Try not to provide entertainment for your child during this time. The aim is that your child feels happy to join in with the day, rather than remaining with the parent in the observation area, in the knowledge that their parent is there if they want to see them.

Please note that this option is at the discretion of our staff and they may decide that it is not working for your child or that they feel it is time to try something new.

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All parents need to be off site from 12pm onwards. Children can be taken home at either 10am, 12pm or 3pm (unless, for whatever reason, we call you to say it would be in their best interests to be picked up at an alternative time).

We do not leave children crying or distressed for long periods of time. In these circumstances we will contact you by telephone.

Points to consider when your child is settling in at the kindergarten.

Every child is unique and reacts differently to the experience of beginning something new. At all times the kindergarten staff and parents will work together to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for the child.

We are aware that both you and your child may be feeling stress at some points during the settling in process. Your child may not appear to be on their "best behaviour". Please don't worry about this – it is all part of the process. As adults, if we try to relax as much as possible and remain confident, this will help the child. Your child might be very sad at the moment of parting, but if the settling in process is going well, she or he will be able to manage this with the support of the kindergarten staff.

If your child continues to be upset after you have gone, please be reassured that we will contact you and will not put your child through an upsetting ordeal.

It is important for you to say goodbye to your child clearly and confidently, stating that you will return so that your child knows what is going on and can express how he or she feels about it. The more confident you are, the better. Children take their cues from the adults' feelings and behaviour.

We ask that you limit the amount of time you stay for at dropping off time as in our experience this is easier for the child, but please do ask for support or advice if it will be helpful.

It is not uncommon for a child to settle very well in a setting, and then unexpectedly a few weeks later find it difficult to come in. This might be for any one of a variety of reasons, and again we will offer our support or help if you would like it.

It is much better for settling if your child attends for at least 2 days per week. In some circumstances, we may occasionally suggest that it is in fact better for your child not to attend at all, than for only 1 day. Children become far more integrated into the friendship groups and more familiar with the routines and ways that we work at Venture, the more days that they attend each week, finding the experience both more rewarding and comfortable.

Please get in touch with us if you have any questions with regards to settling at Venture or if you would like to discuss any of the above.

Email: ventureoutdoorkindergarten@outlook.com Telephone: 07500 927722

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Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the staff and management of Venture Outdoor Kindergarten and will be reviewed annually or before if necessary.

This policy was written by Venture Outdoor Kindergarten September 2017.

Reviewed September 2018.

Reviewed August 2019.

Reviewed August 2020.

Reviewed August 2021.

Reviewed August 2023.

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