

To support a child to make the best of their time at preschool it is important to really get to know them and who knows them better than their families. The family is a child's first teacher and close partnerships with parents and carers are vital to ensure the best possible outcomes for early education outside of the home. Through these relationships settings can learn what makes children really tick and use that knowledge to support their learning and make it as relevant and as personal as possible.

Parents + practitioners = positive learning

When you choose your preschool you should have confidence that they will maintain your child's continued well-being and give you a role as an active partner. The combination of parents' and practitioners' expertise is a powerful one. We have knowledge about child development in general and you have knowledge about your child's development in particular. Channelling information both ways and working together allows your child to feel safe, stimulated and happy in preschool. There should be regular formal and informal opportunities for you to discuss your child with their key person.

Most approaches to early years education stress the importance of social interaction.

Attachment theory tells us that we are born wired to seek relationships with others. When these relationships and attachments are positive and secure children feel safe enough to explore the world and interact with others, this paves the way for learning. An additional benefit of social interaction is that it deepens understanding. Your chosen preschool should encourage children to collaborate with adults and peers in order to support higher order thinking and extend learning.

What should your setting be doing?

It is important to establish a rapport with you at the first contact. You should feel supported and welcome, confident that your child's preschool trusts you and your instincts. Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between you and the team. Your input will be important for the preschool to establish your child's starting point. There should be an opportunity at a home visit or first meeting to share information about your child that will ease the settling process. This should be a flexible arrangement until all parties feel comfortable about separating. Those children who need more time should be supported accordingly.



It has been recognised that people working in early years develop strong feelings for the children and in our opinion that is as it should be. Your chosen setting will operate a key person system and that person makes sure that while at preschool, your child feels valued and cared about by someone in particular. Someone, who is 'crazy about the kid' as developmental psychologist Bronfenbrenner puts it. The charity What about the children? says professional love should be close to parental love and we agree with them. We cannot be family to our children, but when they are with us, we aim to be the next best thing. If a child needs a cuddle they should have one!

Where your preschool team welcomes you as a partner and establishes a relationship that is based upon trust and understanding, you have a foundation for building positive learning experiences for your child.

Play B C Preschool where every day is a learning adventure.

www.playbc.co.uk
www.facebook.com/playbc
info@playbc.co.uk