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# The Nursery Induction Toolkit 2026

A Manager's Guide to Supporting Confident Transitions in Early Years

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# The Settling-In Readiness Check

Before you build your plan, see where your setting stands. Score each statement from 1 (not yet) to 5 (consistently true), then total your score.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Our settling-in plan opens with a clear purpose statement families understand | |
| 2 | We capture the whole child: languages, culture, comfort items, medical needs | |
| 3 | We ask what each child enjoys, and use it to plan their first week | |
| 4 | We collect the key words each child uses at home, in every home language | |
| 5 | We know each child's routines before they walk through the door | |
| 6 | Families are guided to share their hopes and concerns, not left with an 'Other' box | |
| 7 | Every settling-in plan sets out what we will do while the child settles | |
| 8 | We review settling daily, and families see and shape the record | |

MY TOTAL

out of 40

| | |
|---|---|
| 32 to 40 | Strong foundations. Refine and personalise. |
| 20 to 31 | Solid start. Use this toolkit to close the gaps. |
| 8 to 19 | Start here. Build your plan page by page. |

Scores tell you where to start. A conversation shows you how to finish.

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# The Child's Story

For families, before day one. The details that help us prepare for your child's arrival with sensitivity and awareness. Manager: share this page with every new family, and with returning children moving to a new class.

Child's name

Preferred name

Date of birth

Parents' names

Who will collect the child

Home languages

Cultural or religious considerations

Medical or allergy information

Comfort items

## I ENJOY...

Favourite toys, preferred play types, beloved books or characters, and the activities that help your child feel calm. We use this to plan a personalised first week.

Capture every child's story digitally, so nothing is lost in a paper file.

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# Key Words We Use at Home

Especially important in multilingual communities. The words and gestures your child uses reduce frustration, support emotional regulation and build trust with their new teacher. Add the home-language word exactly as your child says it.

| THE CHILD NEEDS | WORD OR PHRASE WE USE | HOME-LANGUAGE WORD OR GESTURE |
|---|---|---|
| Toileting | | |
| Comfort | | |
| Hunger | | |
| Thirst | | |
| Anything else | | |

Teacher: learn these before the child's first day, and use them from the first hello.

Bilingual Arabic and English communication, built into every family's experience.

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# Routines at Home

Settling is deeply connected to predictability. When teachers know what your child is used to, they can create a daily rhythm that feels familiar and reassuring, and anticipate emotional triggers before they arrive.

## Sleep patterns

Naps, timings, how your child settles to sleep

## Eating habits

Mealtimes, appetite, likes and dislikes, how they like to be helped

## Toileting routines

Nappies or toilet, words used, level of independence

## Sensory sensitivities

Sounds, textures, busy spaces, anything that overwhelms

## Separation rituals

How goodbyes happen at home, and what helps most

Familiar rhythms from day one. See how settings keep every routine visible to the team.

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# Family Expectations & Notes

Not a vague 'Other' box. Guided space for what matters to you, so you feel heard and we start as partners.

## Your concerns

Anything you are worried about for the settling period

## Your hopes for the settling period

What a great first month would look like for your child

## Cultural considerations

Anything we should understand and respect

## Medical notes

Beyond the essentials already shared on The Child's Story page

## Siblings in the nursery

Names and rooms, so we can connect the dots

Every family heard, every note on record, nothing lost in a handover.

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# While I Settle, We Will...

Teacher and manager: turn the plan into practice. A practical roadmap the whole team can follow, shared with the family, a living document rather than a static form.

## Comfort strategies

What we will do when the child needs reassurance

## Attachment-building rituals

How the key person builds the relationship, day by day

## Planned activities

First-week experiences built from what the child enjoys

## Goodbye routines

The consistent goodbye we will use with this family

## Communication methods

How and when the family hears from us while their child settles

## Transition supports

Anything extra this child needs to feel safe and understood

A roadmap your whole team can see, in one place, for every child.

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# The Settling-In Review

Settling is not a one-day event. Track progress, adjust strategies, and keep families part of the record. Manager: review entries across classrooms to see how every child is settling.

| DAILY / WEEKLY RECORD | WHAT WE NOTICED AND AGREED |
|---|---|
| Emotional observations | |
| Engagement in play | |
| Relationship building | |
| Eating and sleeping | |
| Parent feedback | |
| Agreed next steps | |

## Teacher reflection

What is working, and what we will adjust

## Parent feedback

How settling feels from home

Returning child? Revisit last year's plan so their story is never lost.

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# Every child's story matters.

When managers invest in a thoughtful, emotionally intelligent settling-in plan, they strengthen the entire culture of the nursery: every family feels valued, and every teacher is empowered to provide nurturing, personalised care. A well-crafted settling-in document is not just a tool for transition. It is a foundation for trust, connection and confident beginnings.

BUILD IT ONCE, USE IT EVERY YEAR

This plan works as a digital form in illumine: complete it with parents at Meet the Teacher, let families add details from home, and revisit each child's plan when they return to a new class, so nothing is lost between years.

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