

Settling in at Natural Nurture

The tips below are designed to make the transition from home to Natural Nurture as smooth as possible for your child...and you! Of course the advice will vary slightly depending on the age of your child but we hope you'll find the general guidance below (taken from Netmums) adaptable, whatever your personal circumstances.

1. Be positive about the change

Children are incredibly intuitive and can pick up on adult stresses and anxieties. So in the run-up to the big day **it's important to try and keep a positive mindset to avoid transferring stress onto your child. When you're feeling anxious try to remind yourself that your child will gain hugely from being a little more independent from you.** They will be getting used to new environments, making new relationships and learning important social skills - all fantastic 'life training' and great preparation for formal education.

2. Talk to your child about starting nursery

Be open with your child about what will be happening soon and the new change to their routine. Children like the security of routine so it's important to prepare them by chatting with them about Natural Nurture Nursery. Make a few 'trial runs' to Natural Nurture from the house so they become familiar with the location. Explain what Natural Nurture Nursery is all about - there will be lots of new friends to meet, lovely new toys to play with and animals to feed etc.

We will provide you with a booklet containing photographs of the staff members, the different animals, the farm and nursery facilities, which we recommend you look through with your child helping them to build up familiarity with Natural Nurture before the big day.

3. Settling in Sessions

We will provide a minimum of one hourly visit (9:30am -10:30am) for your child and you to attend together. It's a useful way for you to get a proper feel for the routines that we follow and the activities that are on offer. If any additional settling sessions are needed, we will recommend that your time together is gradually decreased over the hour.

During the settle in sessions, you can take this opportunity to share information about your child with their keyworker; their interests, likes and dislikes, special words, preferred foods, favourite toys, routines they like to follow, etc. Once you have access to our observation system, Tapestry, you will also be asked to provide all this information there as well.

Depending on the age of your child you might like to make a booklet together, to give to us, which could include family photos and pictures of your child doing their favourite things - older children can help you do this.

4. Take your cues from your key worker

We understand the emotional turmoil you may be experiencing as you prepare to leave your little one with us. We have built up plenty of experience of looking after children that find the transition difficult, and know how to approach the challenge of separation anxiety. We are well versed in the art of distraction when mummy is about to leave the room!

If you're worried about any aspect of settling your child into Natural Nurture, please share your concerns with us.

It goes without saying that we want your child to be happy with us, so do keep in contact with your child's key worker - just an informal chat when you pick your child up will suffice, so you both have an opportunity to say how you think the settling-in period is progressing.

5. Use comforters if necessary

That could be, a 'blankie' or a favourite cuddly toy. Any familiar reference from home can help reassure your child during the early days of settling into nursery. Of course the transition to Natural Nurture might coincide with the time when you were hoping to wean your little one off their dummy or blankie, but it's probably not advisable to do so during a period of change in your child's life. There aren't many adults walking round sucking dummies or clutching blankets so don't stress about sticking to timescales for giving up comforters!

6. Keep your goodbyes as brief as possible

Saying goodbye at the bus door can test the resolve of even the most practically-minded parent. But it's really important to handle your departure in the right way - a 'clean break' where your child is clear about what is happening is far more preferable to spanning things out and confusing your child. Experts agree that you should tell your child that you are leaving, give them a kiss and then leave; but make sure they understand that you will be coming back for them soon. It's a good idea to give them some kind of time-related reference, eg "Mummy will pick you up in time for tea".

Even if your child cries as you leave, hold firm and continue on your way. Don't leave then go back into the room if your child is crying, as heart-wrenching as that might feel. We will provide the comfort your child needs and there will be plenty of distraction to take their mind off your departure. This isn't easy, but keep in mind how much enjoyment your child will experience at Natural Nurture. We are more than happy for you to call during the day to check on your little one's progress, especially during those early days.

7. Tears are normal

Your child may cry every day when you drop them off, for quite some time. Or you may find that just when you thought everything was starting to fall into place your child regresses and becomes tearful about drop-off for no apparent reason. But tears are just a normal form of expression for your child and do not necessarily indicate that there's a problem you need to follow up.

But please do talk to us if your child seems unusually upset. Many children will cry when mum or dad leaves but are then comforted and perfectly happy for the rest of the day. It's just that children can be rather indignant about being left out of mum's plans - the tears are just a normal way of vocalising this!

8. Don't underestimate tiredness

The settling-in period will probably be an incredibly tiring experience for your child. With a new environment to get used to, and lots of new people to get to know, there's lots for them to take on so try not to pack too many other activities or busy weekends into your schedule for a few weeks. Of course if your child is being particularly teary during these early days this could simply be a manifestation of physical and mental tiredness.

Daily Routine

We have put together this information in the hope that it helps you to understand the layout of the nursery and settles you into the general routine of the nursery alongside your child.

Opening Times 8.00 – 5.00
Snack times are at 10.15am & 3.15pm
Lunch is at 12.00noon

Lay out of Nursery

Farm Fun Bus: This is where coats & bags are kept and location of register, information boards etc. This is where the children are dropped off and picked up.

Farm Fun Bus Bathroom: Located at the back of the bus

Willow Caban: This room is used mainly for Arts & Crafts

Ash Caban: This room is where our we have the trains and building blocks and quiet area

Oak Caban: This is where are 2 yr olds can play away from the older children.

Toilet Barn: This is where there are compostable children toilets and where the hand washing facilities are.

Restaurant: Located near the cottages and where morning snack and lunch is served.

The Cottages: This is where the lunch is cooked

Play Area by the Cabans: We have a play area and a growing area, all our children spend time in the play area together where we have our mud kitchen, climbing frames, music stand, and a gardening area

Polytunnel: This is where the farm grows most of its vegetables etc. Depending on the season the children will help plant seeds or harvest the food.

Woodland: This is a woodland area, where the children can go and explore, make den's and be close to nature.

Farm: The children get to explore the farm and it's animals throughout the day

Farm Office: Located opposite the Farm Fun Bus, this is where afternoon snack is provided, farm produce is sold and where our Operations Manager is if you need to ask her any questions or change sessions etc.

Planning

Our week is planned around a variety of activities: all of which are required to fulfil EYFS requirements and can be found on our website at www.naturalnurture.org/nursery-notice

Activities are approached on a themed basis, which changes every month.



Activities are provided for all children taking into account their individual needs and interests, as well as we can. This is done by using information gathered through observations and assessments done by staff and information provided by you as parents/carers.

This information is also shared where applicable with other settings where a child attends more than one.

All children have access to all toys etc appropriate to their age group.

It is not written in stone and can be altered at any point to accommodate changes that may occur within or outside of the nursery environment.

Physical Care / Needs

Nappy Changing

Nappies are changed regularly throughout, this is time-tabled in during the day to help the day run more smoothly but when a nappy needs changing it is done whatever time of the day it is.

Toilet Training

Older children are supported in toileting & potty training is addressed as and when support is required by parents or when a child is keen to do this.

Washing Hands

All children are encouraged to wash their hands regularly particularly after playing outside, using the toilet and after meeting the animals.

Meals and Water

We ensure that all snacks and meals are healthy and nutritious, and are happy to cater for children with food intolerances. All children have access to water throughout the day and are encouraged to drink regularly

Emotional Needs

Key persons are in place to ensure that every child is supported emotionally and helped to cope with any disruptions, upsets, & uncertainties that come their way, but with this in mind all staff are well informed and involved with all the children within the nursery. There are always lots of cuddles to go around.

Although our days are timetabled and planned this does not mean we are not spontaneous. We will utilise the weather conditions to their full and anything else that happens spontaneously and the children are interested in we will go along with it and enable their learning in the process.

It is our aim to make their days as enjoyable as possible and that they feel happy and secure when they are away from you.

If you have any further questions please let us know, there is a book that explains about the EYFS that is kept in reception area and you are more than welcome to take it and have a look at it. If you would like to have a look at the Policies & Procedures file you are also more than welcome.

We hope this gives you some idea of what goes on whilst you are away.



Timetable

08:00am – Nursery Opens / Breakfast / Free Play
09:00am – 9am Arrivals / Get ready to go on the farm
09:30am – Feed animals
10:00am - Wash Hands ready for snack
10:10am – Snack Time
10:30am – Outdoor activity/play
11:30am – Circle time in the Willow Den
11:50am – Get ready for lunch / Toileting / wash hands
12:00pm – Lunch time
12:45pm – Children leaving at 1pm go to Bus / Others have Activity/Free Play
1:00pm - Outdoor activity/play
2:30pm – Walk up to Bus / Free play in Bus
3:00pm – 3pm session children leave
3:05pm – Those staying until 5pm - Wash Hands for Snack
3:10pm – Snack Time
3:30pm – Outdoor activity/play
4:45pm – Go back to bus and get ready for going home
5:00pm – Nursery closes, time to go home

This routine is flexible and may be changed to fit staffing and any arising circumstances.
Spontaneous play is an important part of children's learning and can always be accommodated.