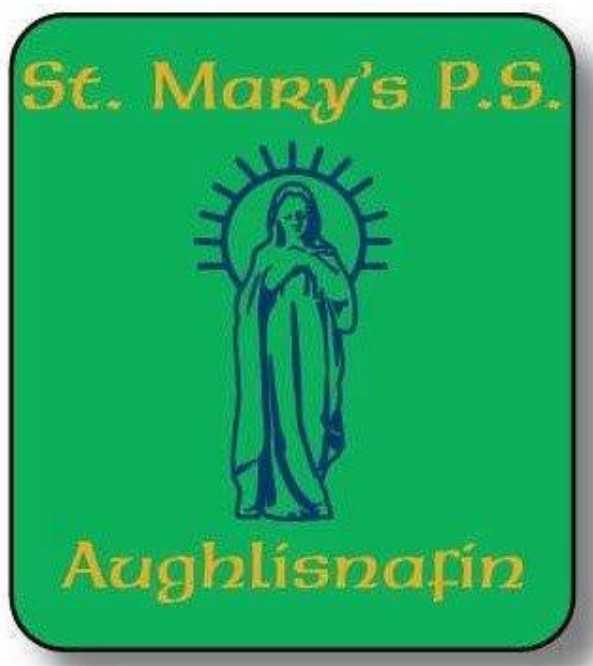


St. Mary's Primary School



Settling in Policy

Revised May 2022

At St. Mary's our aim is that all children feel safe, stimulated, and happy in their class and in the school as a whole and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their child's well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the school has to offer.

In this policy settling in refers to settling into school when the child first comes to the school; settling in each day; adjusting to different routines or activities; settling into a new classroom, settling in with new friends and staff, settling into the move to primary school as well as coping with significant changes in their family circumstances.

Changes can be stressful at any stage in life, but for young children they can be particularly challenging. Moving to new environment and different surroundings with new friends and adults makes demands on young children as they must learn to cope with a new situation. Each child is different, and we see settling in as a process rather than a one-day event.

We aim to support parents and other carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by considering the individual needs and circumstances of each child and their families. The staff at St. Mary's will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the school environment by:

- Providing the parents with the relevant policies and procedures of the school.
- Inviting parents and the children to a play and stay session in June before they start school to familiarise themselves with the classroom, the toilets, and the staff.
- Obtain information from parents so that we can meet each child's individual needs.
- Providing information booklets on what the children need to get, what we expect and daily routines etc.
- To ensure good interaction and communication between staff and parents.
- Encouraging parents whose child is taking a longer period to settle into school.
- Each child will have their own start date according to their age.
- Respect the needs of all children and their families and adjust times/length accordingly.
- Encouraging parents to separate themselves from their child and reassure them.

AIMS

- To support children and their parents/ carers in the move to their new environment
 - To work closely and share information with parents/ carers
 - To help children and parents/ carers form strong relationships with staff
 - To help children feel secure and confident in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- To collaborate with parents/ carers to help children with any difficulties that may arise

During settling in we take into consideration that:

- Children settle into a new setting in lots of different ways and timescales.
- A new setting can be daunting to a child; especially if the child is new to English or has speech and communication difficulties or is a child with special educational needs.
- The adults must build up a relationship with the children so that they feel safe and secure in their environment.
- Each child has their own unique experiences and learning before they enter our school.
- Parents also have their own experiences and for some this is their first child going to school and for others their last, each have their own emotions attached. Therefore, we aim to be sensitive to the needs of all parents and understand their emotions.

We encourage children to :

- Take in a toy from home or a picture of their family to help with attachment issues.
- Say goodbye to Mum/Dad and have a hug.

We encourage parents to :

- Share the names of family members with staff so that we may talk to the children about familiar people in their lives.
- Reassure their children that they will be back to collect them and that they love them.
- Talk positively to their children about the staff and their school, this will help to develop relationships and trust.
- Talk to their child about why they must go to school and the fun activities and friends they will make there.
- Have open communication with staff about any issues or worries you or your child may have.
- Understand that children often calm after a parent has left and we will contact you if we have any concerns.
- Get into a good morning routine that is calm and stress free for your child. If you are emotional, stressed, and anxious then your child is likely to be the same. Try to be positive and reassuring.
- We encourage parents not to stay too long and prolong goodbyes as this makes a child upset and anxious. Let them know when you will be back, who is collecting them and that you love them and always say goodbye.

As a staff we:

- Build up a relationship with each child and talk to them about their family members.
- We find out what the child's interests are.
- We have a settling in period in class so that we have time to get to know each other and to bond.

- We encourage the children to bring in a familiar toy from home as a comfort and as something familiar to talk about.
- We encourage the children to bring in a picture of their family to talk about and to look at when they miss them.
- Talk to the children about class routines and encourage them to join in.
- We praise effort.
- Reassure the children that their parent/childminder will come back to collect them.
- Use a visual timetable so that the children know what is happening and what comes next.
- That the routines and adults are consistent, predictable, and responsive to each child's attachment.

Each child is a special unique individual with their own personality and each child's experiences are different. Some children will settle quickly others will take a little longer. During the settling in process some children will regress, some will thrive, some will withdraw and others will display challenging behaviour. These behaviours are all perfectly normal. Each child's settling in experience is different and we aim to support each child on that journey.