



Early Childhood Settling In Policy

Policy Owner:	Head of Early Childhood
Formally Endorsed By:	Chair of Trustees
Endorsement Date:	September 2025
Next Review Date:	September 2026

Human connection in all we do

Policy Statement

Children join Early Childhood with a range of previous experiences and begin their school journey with differing needs and at different stages of development. We need to ensure all needs are met and that starting school is an enjoyable, secure, and positive experience for each child.

Starting school can be an anxious time for both parents and children. We want to make this process as smooth as possible and to quickly establish a close working partnership between home and school. We want staff to understand and implement this policy in order for the children to have an enjoyable and relaxed introduction to Early Childhood.

Aims

At Michael Hall School, we aim to establish a positive partnership with families which will enable each child to settle into school quickly and happily. We acknowledge that each child is unique and we aim to respond to the needs of each child in order to ensure that they settle into Early Childhood positively and with confidence.

Objectives

For the school to be well prepared to admit children into Early Childhood classes.

For the school to be well prepared to admit children at any stage of their school career.

To set out clear and proper provision for the first days and weeks in school for each child.

For parents/carers to have a clear understanding of the school's ethos and expectations in accordance with this Settling In Policy and Admissions Policy.

For the children to:

Feel happy and secure in order to develop their full potential

Feel valued and value others, developing positive relationships

Be independent, make decisions, and explore the learning environment

For all parents/carers to:

Feel welcome and valued

Share information, working as partners for the benefit of their child's education

Understand the Early Childhood curriculum and procedures relating to admissions and settling in

To establish a learning environment which:

Is welcoming

Is safe and secure as well as stimulating and exciting

Is appropriately resourced for both inside and outside classroom activities

Is organised to encourage independence

Equal Opportunities

We believe that it is the right of all children, parents, and carers, regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, ability, linguistic, cultural, or home background to be included in all aspects of school life. Each child will be valued as an individual and individual needs with regard to settling in will be dealt with sensitively and in partnership with the child's parent or carer.

Whenever possible, translations will be available of all relevant documents and interpreters arranged for parents/children who have English as an additional language. The school ethos and environment must welcome and reflect families from different cultures and backgrounds.

Implementation

Children (when starting Early Childhood)

Are given the opportunity to visit their Early Childhood classroom in the term before they start.

Will be offered a home visit, led by the class teacher accompanied by a member of the Early Childhood team.

Will be admitted gradually over the first few weeks of term. Their stay will be gradually extended as they settle into their new class.

Are praised and supported in their first attempts, with staff using observations to plan the development of skills and knowledge.

Are introduced to school routines and given clear guidance at the beginning of each session. During the settling-in period, children are allowed to take part in activities at their own pace.

Are encouraged to interact with other children and adults. In accordance with our Behaviour Policy, staff will establish positive relationships with children and introduce them to school expectations.

Children may begin on a part-time basis for the first week, then stay for lunch in the second week, and move to full time in the third week. Some children take longer to settle, and it may be appropriate to extend the part-time period for longer.

Parents/Carers (when starting Early Childhood)

Are invited to visit their child's classroom and meet the staff in the term before their child starts school. During this visit they will be given a welcome pack containing relevant information and procedures related to their child starting school.

Are offered a home visit prior to their child starting. During the visit parents and carers meet staff working in their child's classroom and are given the opportunity to raise concerns and ask questions.

Are encouraged to stay with their child on their first day and for longer if necessary.

Are invited to attend an information evening early in the Autumn Term. At this meeting, Early Childhood staff will highlight key features of the Early Childhood curriculum and give advice on how parents may support their children's learning at home.

Staff (with children starting in Early Childhood)

Will spend time with new parents and children in order to welcome them into school.

Provide a stimulating, welcoming learning environment for the children.

Make observations to inform planning and initial assessments to identify the needs of each child.

Should share and evaluate observations in order to agree a consistent approach.

Carry out a series of observations within the first six weeks in order to assess attainment across areas of development and to identify areas of concern.

Management Arrangements

The Early Childhood Lead, in conjunction with the Headteacher, is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of this policy.

All staff are responsible for implementing procedures outlined in this policy.

Refer also to other policies on our website:

Behaviour

SEND

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Safeguarding & Child Protection

Attendance

Complaints

GDPR