

PARTICIPATORY SETTLING-IN PHASE

PREMISE

“The first meeting with the educational service involves entrusting a very young child to people and environments that are unfamiliar to him: it is a transition that arouses contrasting emotions and feelings that are not easily processed. Building trust is the outcome of a process that can take different lengths of time for each parent and family.

Information and direct knowledge of the context, as well as a constant willingness to listen and engage in dialogue from educators, are the first building blocks in establishing a relationship of trust with the environment and the staff.

All professional figures are involved in the welcoming process, each having an educational function regardless of the task performed. The educational community welcomes, builds and guarantees an organization and a unity that can instill confidence in parents and other reference figures of the child each within their own role, as they engage with the educational service”

From “National guidelines for early childhood education services (DM 4372022)”

The participatory settling-in phase model has been flexibly adapted to the contexts of the educational services of the Cooperativa l'Abbaino and, after several years of experimentation and testing, can now be considered consolidated. The value of this approach lies in the involvement of families in the care and growth processes of children from the very first moments of interaction between the two educational contexts.

MODE OF SETTLING-IN PHASE

During the SETTLING-IN period, the primary needs of the children in terms of socialization and familiarity with the environment, as well as the parents' need to establish, from the outset, relationships based on trust and knowledge of the staff and space, must be considered.

During the settling-in period, staff are encouraged to continuously use both indoor and outdoor spaces, allowing children the opportunity to explore and experience the various possibilities of the context together with their family member or caregiver.

It is advisable to adopt flexible strategies, respecting the child's needs, maintaining a constant dialogue with the family regarding the progress of the settling in process.

FIRST WEEK

Procedure for the first 3 days of settling in:

- **First day:** 10.00-12.30 with the presence of the parent: the parent handles the child's routine such as the changing and lunch routine (changes the child and feeds him) while the educator observes.
- **Second day:** 9.30-12.30 with the presence of the parent, the educator supports the child and the parent and engages into a relationship with them, during the snack, changing and lunch routines.
- **Third day:** 9.30-12.30 with the presence of the parent, the educator becomes the leading figure during the snack, changing and lunch routines (she changes the child and feeds him) and the parent is present but takes a step back.
- **Fourth day:** 8.30-12.30 without the presence of the parent
- **Fifth day:** 8.30-12.30 without the presence of the parent

SECOND WEEK

Consolidation of snack and lunch routines. Gradually, the entrance time is brought forward and the time slot is extended from 8:30 to 12:30, with children leaving by 13:30.

THIRD WEEK

Settling into sleep, with children leaving by 3.30 pm at the latest, to be assessed depending on how the child reacts.

FOURTH WEEK

Completion of the full schedule, including the afternoon snack routine.

Organization of settling-in groups

The settling-in of children is proposed in small groups, approximately 5/6. Exceptions may be foreseen in increase, in particular for the first group, on evaluation of the staff in relation to the number of children to acclimatize, the spaces available, the number of children already attending.

The scheduling of acclimatization groups is organized with a two-week interval between each group. Additionally, further acclimatizations may occur during the educational year to fill vacancies due to possible withdrawals or resignations.

Communications with families

The division of children into groups and the corresponding settling-in dates will be communicated to families at the meeting scheduled for the families of new members (small, medium, mixed and large groups).