

The British International School Istanbul
EYFS Settling in Policy

Introduction

Starting school is a big step for children. It is also a big step for parents too. Leaving your child with someone that you do not know well is hard and so it is normal to feel anxious. Our aim is to work with you to make the settling in process as smooth as possible. The aim of our policy is therefore to settle the child in without any tears.

Working together

In order for your child to settle into school, we need to work together. Settling in is a process. Your child has to build a relationship with their teacher and feel comfortable before they will be ready to leave you. We will therefore need to work with you to make this happen.

Building a relationship

The starting point for settling is relationships. Children need to feel that their parents are happy and relaxed about them playing and being with the teacher. You can help this process by letting the teacher play with your child, whilst you stand back. This sends the message to the child that the teacher is a 'safe' person. Do not sneak off whilst the teacher is playing with your child either. Your child may otherwise associate playing with the teacher with losing their parent.

School is a place where teachers play with me

It is important that children learn that school is a place where the teachers play with them. It is not a place where they come and parents stay and play. This means that whilst we want your child to go and play, we ask you not to play with them, although we want you to stay around. It is hard for most parents to sit back and not join in with their child, so you might like to talk to other parents or even bring in something to read! If your child will not play, don't worry. They can stay with you. After a while children do get bored especially when they see others having fun. Do not push your child away. They will leave you when they are ready. Don't encourage your child to stay either by playing or talking with them!

Teaching the child that parents always come back

One of the things that children need to learn is that their parent always comes back. There are a series of exercises that we need you to complete. When you and your child can easily complete these exercises, it will time for you to leave your child for a complete session. Your teacher will tell you when to start doing these activities.

Exercise 1

Once your child is playing – move away a few steps – about 2 metres
Can your child carry on playing when you are not next to them?
Keep repeating until your child can play without you standing next to them.

My child can play without me standing close by

Exercise 2

Once your child is playing, **say** that you have to collect an object from over the other side of the playground – then go. (Don't worry if your child tries to follow you) .
Keep repeating until your child can cope. It is important that your child knows that you are moving over as this way your child is learning that you go, but always come back.

My child can play when I go over to the other side of the playground

Exercise 3

When your child is playing or engaged in an activity, say that you are going out to the car or to get something from a room. Go and come back immediately. Make sure that your child sees that you have come back. Don't worry if your child tries to follow you. Repeat this until your child has accepted that you come and go.

Bribes are not needed

Children do not need bribes to come to school. Do not tell your child that they will get a reward for coming. This actually tells the child that school must be a scary place.

All children are different

Some children settle in to school very quickly, whilst others are a little slower. Don't worry if your child needs more time. Settling in is not a race! Some of the exercises may need to be completed 10 or 15 times in a session!

Parents need to settle in too!

All parents find leaving their children hard. Don't feel guilty about worrying, but try hard to be positive and relaxed with your child. If this is your first child, you may find it particularly hard. We will not let your child be unhappy and if we work together your child will settle in fine. A good tip is to make sure that you have something to do on the first morning that you leave your child – go see a friend or go shopping!