Session 2.1
Shared care

This session explores the benefits for key children and key people of using a shared care system with in the setting.

Video - Shared care

Shared care is not only about 'filling in' or being the 'back up' when another practitioner is not there for their key children, it's also about being aware of each other and each other's key children and working together, so that you can anticipate when and how you can support each other to provide every child with the security and caring interactions they need throughout the day.

Why is shared care important?

For child :

- *Minimises potential for separation distress*

- *Supports child feeling separation distress*
- *Helps child not to feel abandoned by special person*
- *Allows child to make different relationships whilst feeling securely attached to their key person*

For parents :

- *Gives a feeling of trust and well-being knowing their child is understood and cared about throughout the day even if their key person can't be there all the time.*
- *At drop off and pick up times it's important to feel that the practioner sharing information about their child, really does care and know about them.*

For practitioner :

- *To act as a back-up if they can't be available*
- *To support each other at stressful or difficult times*
- *To share information about key children that they might not know or have seen*
- *To share skills and expertise*

Task 1

Shared care - video clip 1

Shared care - video clip 2

Shared care - video clip 3

Shared care - video clip 4

Shared care - video clip 5

There are 5 video clips showing shared care in action.

- What evidence do you see of practitioners supporting each other to enable an effective Key Person approach?
- How do practitioners support children when their Key Person is not available?

Personal care routines - video clip 1

- Laura and Rose working in the same room. Rose is jack's Key Person. Laura goes to Jack and picks him up onto her lap to comfort him when he grissles as Rose is busy elsewhere in the room. Rose and Laura share information as they work. They both reinforce each others presence in the room by showing children where they are and saying their names and encouraging them to wave hello.

Shared care - video clip 2

- Rose takes Dylan away and has to leave Jack – she helps this transition telling Jack " I'll be right back, coming back soon". Jack looks lost after Rose leaves, Laura notices and goes to Jack – she knows Jack well and what he likes and enters into play with him with the floor toys. Jack feels secure again and happy to play with Laura in the absence of Rose.

Shared care - video clip 3

- Laura comforts Ida who had become upset whilst her mum was leaving. Laura holds her close, talks to her and offers her some breakfast. When Maria (Ida's Key Person) comes she gives Ida a big cuddle showing her pleasure in seeing her again. As Maria cuddles Ida and feeds her breakfast, Laura shares information explaining how Ida had been upset, and that she hadn't eaten anything yet.

Shared care - video clip 4

- Ava arrives with mum and Ava enthusiastically tells Clare about the ducklings she's seen. Ava waves and smiles as mum leaves and Clare chats about her lunch box with her. Clare has to do another job so Ava is left standing looking around the room – looking back to Clare for contact. Another practitioner notices and invites Ava to join her and some other children at the table. Slowly Ava approaches and the practitioner talks encouragingly to her to help put her at her ease.

Shared care - video clip 5

- Davide and Seth are planting plants. Antonella helps them cooperate and then leaves them to play. (Davide's home language is Italian) Davide sees his key person, Michelle, and joins her at the bird table. Michelle chats with him about the bird-table. Back at the digging again, Davide takes Seth's plant and runs off with it followed by an upset Seth, and Michelle. Together, Michelle and Antonella, help the pair resolve the dispute. Antonella speaks Davide's native Italian so can explain things to Davide sharing the responsibility of helping Davide's social behaviour.

Reflection

Ask practitioners to reflect on the following questions in pairs and note down their thoughts.

Ask each pair to share feed back to the group as a whole – If this is recorded onto a flipchart as each pair shares their notes, you can avoid repetition of points and have something to work with for action planning.

- ## When might you need support from others with your key children?

  Possible thoughts might be: when a child is distressed or not well, when you need time to talk to a parent, when a child is new to your setting or room, If you are called out of the room, if you are involved in one to one care routines, if you are involved in a focused play activity or observation with another child, if you have been absent (sharing information)

- ## What might prevent effective information sharing between practitioners?

  Possible thoughts might be: Unexpected absence through sickness, shifts that don't coincide, understaffed, strained relationships between practitioners, differences in opinions on what information is worthwhile sharing, lack of confidence in own ability or knowledge, power struggle in team, different formats for sharing information, no clear policy on sharing information- what/ when/how?, poor or different communication skills.

Action to be taken

Using the information gathered from the reflection questions, what actions can be put in place to improve practitioners supporting each other in shared care and information sharing between practitioners.

- What action can be put in place to improve how you support each other?
- Do you share information effectively?
- Could this be improved?