

# New Baby

*As a setting, you can really help to prepare a child for the arrival of a new baby brother or sister. It is obviously a time of great change for the whole family and can have a significant impact on a child's behaviour.*



## What are the common difficulties?

- Children's behaviour changes as they pick up on parental stress, medical needs, the arrival of the new baby and lots of visitors
- Children are unsure what is happening and become anxious
- Once the baby is brought home, children may be woken by the baby crying and therefore get less sleep
- Children may feel "pushed out" by parents
- Children may find it difficult to separate from parents
- Children's development may regress, they may want to use a bottle/dummy or be fed

## Why do difficulties occur when a new baby arrives?

- Children feel resentment towards their new sibling
- Children are finding it difficult to share their parents' attention
- The child and parents may be tired
- The child learns that they get attention from their parents if they behave inappropriately
- Children are expected to become more independent

## How can we help?

- Ensure that parents know who their child's key-person is so they can share concerns and changes as they occur
- Be proactive, share story books with the child about new babies
- Set up role play situations - washing/feeding/dressing/changing nappies
- If the child tells you that they don't like the baby, say that you understand and that it isn't always fun to have a new brother or sister. Read stories to reassure them
- If the child's behaviour regresses (eg. If they say they can't feed themselves or use a baby voice) then actively ignore this and give praise when they are behaving appropriately again
- Explain how the child can help their baby brother or sister. Encourage parents to take photos of the child helping at home so you can share them at nursery

