

Parental Involvement Policy

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met.

Policy Statement: We believe that children benefit most from early year's education and care when parents and settings work together in partnership.

Our aim is to support parents as their children's first and most important educators by involving them in their children's education and in the full life of the setting. We also aim to support parents in their own continuing education and personal development. Some parents are less well represented in early year's settings; these include fathers, parents who live apart from their children but who still play a part in their lives as well as working parents. In carrying out the following procedures, we will ensure all parents are included.

When we refer to 'parents' we mean both mothers and fathers; these include both natural or birth parents as well as step-parents and parents who do not live with their children, but have contact with them and play a part in their lives. 'Parents' also includes same sex parents as well as foster parents. The Children Act (1989) defines 'Parental responsibility' is *all the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property*'. (For a full explanation of who has parental responsibility, refer to the Pre-school Learning Alliance's *Child Protection Record* publication.)

EYFS key themes and commitments

The Themes and Principles describe the features of our practice on which the Early Years Foundation Stage is based. They emphasise that the child is of first importance and that all relationships, experiences and the environment together influence how the child will develop, plan and learn.

http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2011/10/EYFS_Principles1.pdf.

A Unique Child –1.2 Inclusive practice, 1.4 Health and well-being

Positive Relationships 2.1 Respecting each other, 2.2 Parents as partners, 2.3 Supporting learning, 2.4 Key person

Enabling environments –3.2 Supporting every child

Procedures

- We have a means to ensure all parents are included – that may mean we have different strategies for involving fathers or parents who work or live apart from their children.
- We make every effort to accommodate parents who have a disability or impairment.
- We consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.
- We encourage parents to visit the setting before applying for a place for their child, and to make at least one visit in the term before their child starts with us;
- We encourage parents to decide how best to settle their child with us when first starting and after a period of prolonged absence, and we are led by the parents in our approach;
- We encourage parents to discuss with each other the various ways they can contribute to the running of the preschool and the practices of the preschool.
- We acknowledge that some parents may feel more comfortable discussing our practice with another parent rather than a member of staff and we ask our Committee members to keep themselves informed so that they may feel confident to discuss with other parent any issues;

- We provide each child and their family with two named key persons, who act as their first point of contact for any queries, concerns and discussions. We encourage our key person staff to take pride in their role, and to increase their own knowledge when challenged by a parent rather than passing the query onto a more senior member of staff;
- We are committed to an ongoing dialogue with parent to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families;
- We ask parent to complete an "All about Me" booklet to provide us with more information about their child's likes and dislikes, abilities and requirements; with their main key person from the second session. This gives the child, parents and key person time to get to know each other.
- We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies through access to written information and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting. All parents are welcome and encouraged to join the committee.
- We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress
- Where applicable, we work with parents to carry out an agreed plan to support special educational needs.
- We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children - either formally or informally - and ensure parents have access to their children's online Tapestry Learning Journal. Parents are encouraged to record their own observational comments on the system.
- We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
- We inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training.
- We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
- We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the setting in ways that are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language.
- We hold meetings in venues that are accessible and appropriate for all.
- We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
- We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
- We provide opportunities for parents to learn about the curriculum offered in the setting and about young children's learning, in the setting and at home. During Parent Interactions, Parents Evenings and Our Open Evening.
- Staff are encouraged to update their skills and knowledge in relation to enhancing Parent Partnerships, through training.

In compliance with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is in place:

- Admissions policy;
- Developmental records of children.
- Complaints procedure;
- Record of complaints;

This policy is underpinned by:

Children Act 1989 and 2004 Data Protection Act 1998 Equality Act 2010

Every Child Matters Change for Children 2004 Freedom of Information Act 2000