



10.5 Parental Involvement

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 that 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* as '*all the rights, duties, powers, 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 publication *Safeguarding Children*.)

Procedures

1. Parents are made to feel welcome in our setting. They are greeted appropriately and there is adult seating available, should it be required.
2. 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.
3. We make every effort to accommodate parents who have a disability or impairment
4. We consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.
5. We ensure ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
6. We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies, through access to written information including our 'Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
7. Information about a child and their family is kept confidential within our setting. We provide a Privacy Notice detailing why and how personal information is processed. The exception to this is where there is cause to believe that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or where there are concerns regarding a child's development that need to be shared with another agency. Parental permission is sought, unless there are reasons not to in order to protect the safety of the child. Reference is made to our Information Sharing Policy on seeking consent for disclosure.



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8. We seek specific parental consent to administer medication, take a child for emergency treatment, take a child on an outing and take photographs for record keeping.
9. The expectation that we make of parents are made clear at the point of registration.
10. We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting.
11. We encourage parents to become involved in the social and cultural life of our setting and to actively contribute to it.
12. We seek parents' views regarding significant changes to the delivery of our service.
13. We provide sufficient opportunity for parents to share necessary information and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality
14. We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress via Tapestry.
15. We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children – through Tapestry and we ensure parents have access to Tapestry.
16. Key workers are available, if needed, to meet with parents to discuss their child progress and to share concerns.
17. Where applicable, our key workers work with parents to carry out and agreed plan to support special educational needs.
18. Where applicable, our key workers work with parents to carry out any agreed tasks where a Protection Plan is in place for a child.
19. We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
20. We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
21. 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.
22. We hold meetings in venues that are accessible and appropriate for all.
23. We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
24. We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and we check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
25. 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. There are opportunities for parents to take active roles in supporting their child's learning, in the setting and at home, informally through helping out or taking part in activities with their child, or through structured projects engaging parents and staff in learning about children's learning.

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

- Admissions Policy.
- Complaints procedure.
- Record of complaints.
- Developmental records of children.